

25 43A

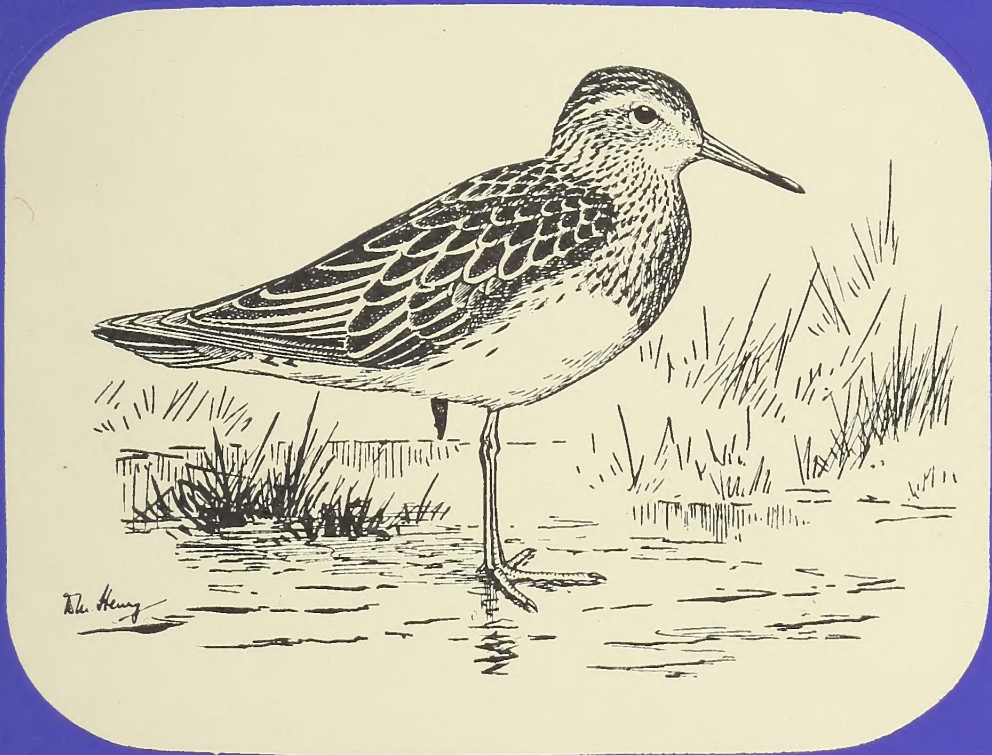
THE NATURAL
HISTORY MUSEUM

7 - MAY 2008

PRESENTED
ZOOLOGY LIBRARY

THE LONDON BIRD REPORT

— No. 16 —



Published December 1952 by

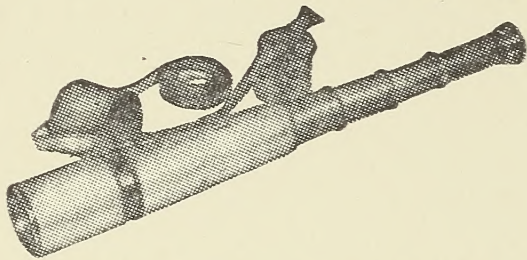
THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NUMBER SIXTEEN • 1951 • PRICE: TWO SHILLINGS & SIXPENCE

Our Famous "4 Power" Pancratic TELESCOPES

IDEAL FOR BIRD WATCHERS !

Our export demand for these instruments is still increasing, but we can still offer a limited number for the home market



P.204 2" Object Glass
Powers 25x, 30x, 35x, 40x
£12 12s 0d

P.205 2¼" Object Glass
Powers 25x, 30x, 35x, 40x
£13 13s 0d

Open 30" Closed 10½"

Covered in Brown Leather with Caps and Sling for carrying (as illustrated)

EXTRA LIGHTWEIGHT PRISMATIC BINOCULARS

8 x 25 - £9 15s 8 x 30 - £14 10 x 35 - £15

Repairs to any make of Binocular or Telescope

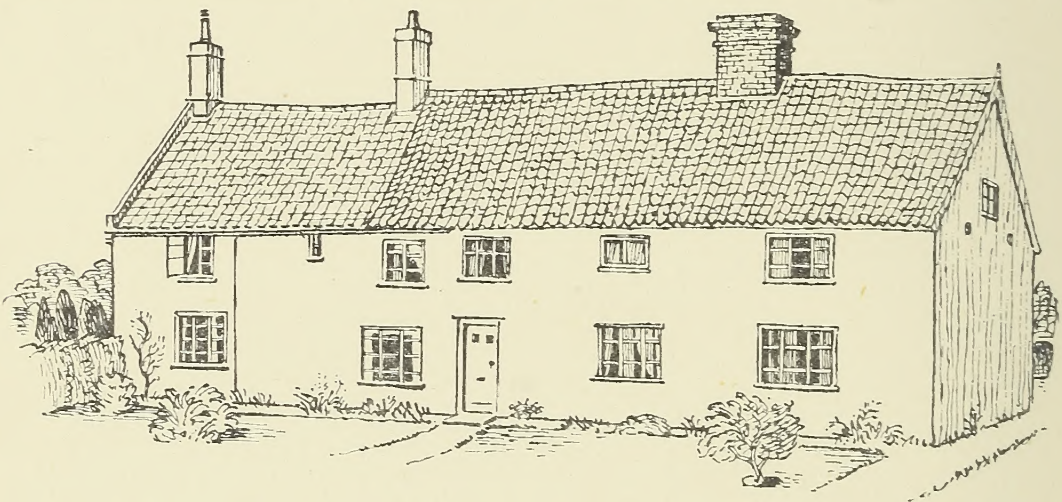
BROADHURST CLARKSON & CO. LTD.

TELESCOPE HOUSE

63 FARRINGDON ROAD - - LONDON, E.C.1

Phone HOL 2156

3 mins from Farringdon Met. Rly. Station



Whatever your problem, Ornithological or otherwise, we try to help you. 20 mins. cycle ride from Minsmere and the Coast, and situated mid-way between Walberswick and Havergate (10 miles), HUNT'S BARN is *OPEN AT ALL SEASONS* and provides every facility for the birdwatcher. Bicycles can be borrowed and there is a garage. Our packed lunches have been recommended. The Handbook and other reference books are open to all.

Remember we only take Ornithologists as our paying guests, and are always pleased to see beginners. Terms : 5½ guineas per week; 20/- per day.

Mr & Mrs D. A. T. MORGAN,

Hunt's Barn, Knodishall, Saxmundham, SUFFOLK, (Station : LEISTON)

THE LONDON BIRD REPORT

Number 16, 1951

THE NATURAL
HISTORY MUSEUM
7 - MAY 2008
PRESENTED
ZOOLOGY LIBRARY

CONTENTS

Cock Red-backed Shrike displaying <i>Photographed by Eric Hosking</i>	Frontispiece
Introduction	1
List of Contributors	4
Birds of the London Area, 1951	6
Black Redstarts in the London Area, 1951	32
The Colour-varieties of Feral Pigeons	35
The Census of Great Crested Grebes, 1951	37
Recording	38
North Kent Marshes	39
Bird Ringing Report, 1950-51	40
Reviews	41

Published December 1952 by

THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

General Secretary : H. A. Toombs
British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, S.W.7

THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Founded in 1858

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS (Minima). Payable to the Treasurer on *January 1st* each year and by new Members on election.

Members (other than members of the South-West Middlesex Group) : £1 1/- (10/- if under 21 years of age). Members of the South-West Middlesex Group : 17/6 (10/- if under 21 years of age).

Family Members : If two or more members of one family live at the same address, only one need pay the full subscription. The remaining members of the family may pay half the subscription appropriate to their age, but will not receive free copies of the Society's journals.

Chingford Branch Associates (who ordinarily attend meetings of the Chingford Branch only) : 7/6 (5/- if under 21 years of age). *Country Associates* (residing outside a radius of 20 miles from St Paul's Cathedral and unable to attend the Society's meetings regularly) and *School Associates* (i.e., "scholars") : 12/6 (7/6 if under 21 years of age). No Associate may vote on any matter connected with the business of the Society. Country and School Associates, but not Chingford Branch Associates, will receive free copies of the Society's journals.

Entrance Fee for new Members and Associates : 2/6.

Members elected after October 1st pay no subscription for the year of election.

PUBLICATIONS. All Members and Associates (other than additional family members and Chingford Branch Associates) are entitled to one free copy of the *London Naturalist* and *London Bird Report*.

AFFILIATIONS. The Society is affiliated to the British Association for the Advancement of Science; the South Eastern Union of Scientific Societies; the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society; the British Ecological Society; the British Trust for Ornithology; the Pedestrians' Association; the Ray Society; and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

THE drawing on the cover by D. M. Reid-Henry is of an American Pectoral Sandpiper. Many members saw the bird of this species which stayed at Perry Oaks from August 31st to September 10th, 1951.



NEW OBSERVATORY AT DUNGENESS

The L.N.H.S. is to share in the management of a new Observatory which has just been set up at Dungeness, outside our area, but within ready access.

The Observatory is primarily for the study of bird migration, but it will also be available for other natural history work. Dungeness is well-known to many members of all Sections; the indigenous birds, plants and insects are interesting and its unique position makes the area a focal point for the arrival and departure of migrants. A greater variety of rare birds has been recorded from this part of Kent than from almost anywhere else in Britain. The Observatory is being managed by a Joint Committee of appointed representatives of the Kent Ornithological Society, the L.N.H.S. and the Hastings and East Sussex N.H.S. It has already been recognised by the British Trust for Ornithology, who have made a small grant towards the initial expenses.

The foundation of the Observatory is the realization of the hopes of local and London ornithologists for many years past. The possibilities for its success can be judged from the fact that in the three months after work began on the first Heligoland trap on August 4th, over 600 birds of 35 species were caught and ringed. Rarities trapped in this short period included Bluethroat, Lapland Bunting, Firecrest and Corncrake.

Your representatives on the Joint Committee know that the Observatory will be much used by London naturalists and they have, therefore, obtained the Council's approval to make a general appeal for donations towards the cost of equipping and running the Observatory. The capital expenditure is by no means over: it is hoped to build at least two more traps, erect a ringing hut and improve the sleeping quarters (at present two rooms in a Coast-guard building close to the Lighthouse).

Monetary contributions towards this important venture would be most gratefully received by Mr. G. E. Manser, 279 Clockhouse Road, Beckenham, Kent, who also has a list of furniture, tools and other equipment required.

Further information about the Observatory can be obtained from Mr. Manser or from one of the other L.N.H.S. representatives (P. W. E. Currie, R. C. Homes, W. D. Park, E. R. Parrinder).

Members wishing to help work the station are asked to give prior notice to the Secretary to the Joint Committee, Mr. H. A. R. Cawkell, 6, Canute Road, Hastings, with whom accommodation, if required, must be booked.

The London Bird Report 1951

Edited by

G. E. Manser and N. J. P. Wadley, M.B.O.U.

Assisted by the Records Committee of the Ornithological Section:

A. Gibbs (Recorder for the North)

J. F. Burton, F.R.E.S. (Recorder for the South)

W. G. Teagle, F.Z.S. (Recorder for Inner London)

C. B. Ashby, M.B.O.U.

R. C. Homes, M.B.O.U.

H. F. Greenfield, B.A.

E. R. Parrinder, M.B.O.U.

P. A. D. Hollom, M.B.O.U.

C. A. White, M.B.O.U.

Introduction

THE London Bird Report for 1951 opens a new era in the history of the Society. The past half-century will soon be chronicled in the "Birds of the London Area, 1900-1950," and it is interesting at this time to speculate on the changes which may occur in the bird population of Greater London in the next fifty years. Will the Black Redstart and the Little Ringed Plover have become common or the Wryneck extinct as breeding species? Shall we see the Hoopoe, Buzzard and the Bee-eater nesting in our countryside? We can only guess the answers, but we can be certain of an increasingly informed and sympathetic band of observers to mourn or salute them.

The remarkable increase in the popularity of bird-watching since the war was again reflected in the Society's membership. Although the number of observers making returns to the Recorders did not equal last year's total, which was, no doubt, due to the special appeal of 1950, the quality of the records did not suffer and 185 species were seen within the radius of twenty miles of St. Paul's.

The feature of the year has been the remarkable series of records for Inner London. The Jay continued its occupation of the metropolis, and a pair even attempted to build on the Foreign Office. It is now regularly nesting in several parks and has become a common sight to Londoners. For only the second time evidence was obtained of Coal-Tits breeding in the central area, and a pair of Mistle-Thrushes took advantage of scaffolding in the Temple to build a nest and raise young. In April, a cock Black-eared Wheatear, a species noted fewer than thirty times in the British Isles, surprised watchers in Regent's Park with its exotic pattern in flight and its addiction to the lower branches of small bushes. A Nuthatch with three juveniles was recorded there in July, but September brought several notable visitors to Inner London.

In this month there was an unusual number of Pied Flycatchers in the Parks, where as many as fifteen were seen on one day. This is the third year in which there has been a small but marked increase in the passage of this migrant. A Phalarope swimming within five yards of a crowded launch as it passed through the shipping below Tower Bridge, was another outstanding record. Even more spectacular was the harrier which was seen flying leisurely over the games pitches of Regent's Park.

Further from the city, members at Beddington watched a lone Swallow hawking insects in sleet and a north-east wind during the third week of March. In the same locality a considerable passage of Willow-Warblers was observed at the end of April, and Black Terns visited many reservoirs in the spring and autumn. In August patient watchers caught periodical glimpses of an Aquatic Warbler during its brief stay at Perry Oaks.

Perhaps the most welcome report was that of the Ospreys which were seen in Kent and Middlesex. Three separate birds spent a day in the Staines area at different times of the year and a fourth gave magnificent displays of its fishing prowess to an observer at Ruxley. A probable Night-Heron at the Brent Reservoir in April was a reminder of how this bird could be overlooked in the fading light which it favours for feeding, but an early Red-necked Grebe at Staines was more noticeable among its Great Crested and Black-necked relatives.

Migrating waders paid their usual seasonal visits to the London Reservoirs and sewage farms, but there was no repetition of the amazing influx of the previous year. Nevertheless, such coastal species as Knot, Bar-tailed Godwit, Grey Plover, and Oyster-catcher occurred at favoured localities. A Temminck's Stint, one of the more elusive waders, appeared at Barn Elms Reservoir on its way to northern breeding grounds, and for the second year in succession an American Pectoral Sandpiper was seen at Perry Oaks in early September.

The rarer nesting species did not do well this year, in some cases perhaps because of the very wet season. The Black Redstart raised fewer broods than last year in the City and there does not appear to have been any extension of the range of the Little Ringed Plover. Nightjars bred in smaller numbers than usual, but the Wood-Lark is now well established in its principle breeding localities. The Red-backed Shrike, the subject of Eric Hosking's frontispiece, is more than holding its own, and thirty-five pairs were proved to have nested in the Society's area. There were fewer records of Wrynecks, however, and there are continued signs of the breeding range of this species contracting south-eastwards, the bird having disappeared from many of its previous nesting places.

The winter months brought the first reports of the Ferruginous Duck since 1947. There were three drakes on the Stone Marshes early in the year and a fourth at Gatton Park in December. At least two Long-tailed Ducks spent several weeks in the Area. The Great Northern Diver, which was recorded for the first time for ten years in 1949, visited London reservoirs for the third successive winter.

The Society's field investigations are steadily increasing our knowledge of the changing status of bird life in the London Area. The Starling Enquiry finished work in April 1952, and it is hoped to publish its conclusions in the next Report. The Heron Census and the count of Great Crested Grebes are among the annual activities that continue. Members also took part in the duck counts organised by the International Wildfowl Enquiry. A paper of major importance to London ornithologists, "The Birds of Inner London, 1900-1950" by S. Cramp and W. G. Teagle, appeared in *British Birds* for December, 1952. About a quarter of the first draft of the Society's book has been written, but it is still too early to forecast when it will be complete. Bird ringing continues to meet with active support, the Society heading the list of participants in the British Trust's Bird Ringing Scheme, details of which will be found elsewhere.

The List Sub-Committee of the British Ornithologists' Union has now completed the compilation of the "Check-List of the Birds of Great Britain and Ireland" For the present the Committee will continue to use the Witherby Check-List, and will advise members when it proposes to adopt the Wetmore classification employed in the new B.O.U. List.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With the increasing membership of the Society the Records Committee welcomes the many new observers who have contributed to this Report and hopes that they will continue to support the Section in its activities. The help given by neighbouring societies, official bodies and private individuals is gratefully acknowledged. Our thanks are due to Leslie Baker, A. W. Bartlet, Mrs. W. I. Brewer, J. J. Garr, F. J. L. Mitchell, D. C. Pegram, and Professor E. H. Warmington for valuable assistance; to D. M. Reid-Henry for his drawing of the American Pectoral Sandpiper; to Eric Hosking for the frontispiece; to the Editors of *British Birds*, and to the officers of the Essex Bird Watching Society, the Kent Ornithological Society, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the British Empire Naturalists Association, the Zoological Society of London and the Committee on Bird Sanctuaries in the Royal Parks for exchanges of records and information. We also have to acknowledge many kindnesses from the Metropolitan Water Board and the Middlesex County Council. Finally, we offer our thanks to our contributors whose names will be found in the list which follows.

List of Contributors

- Miss C. M. Acland
 Mrs. H. F. Allcard (per G.E.M.)
 H. E. Andrews
 Miss E. M. Archer
 T. Archer (per W.G.T.)
 M. J. Ardley
 C. B. Ashby
 R. S. Ashley
 J. W. Attfield (per G.E.M.)
 H. G. Attlee
 B. P. Austin
 J. G. Austin
 S. Austin
 C. E. Baker
 A. W. Bartlet
 T. L. Bartlett
 Miss V. H. Baxter
 J. Bedford
 J. S. S. Beesley
 H. Bentham
 A. H. Betts
 Dr. G. Beven
 J. Bidwell (per H.M.P.)
 H. A. Bilby
 T. Bispham
 F. H. Bourne (per G.E.M.)
 Miss M. R. Bourne
 W. R. P. Bourne
 G. H. Brewer (per W.I.B.)
 Mrs. W. I. Brewer
 W. E. Browett
 Philip Brown
 B. W. Brownsey
 J. F. W. Bruhn
 D. I. Bunce
 H. J. Burkill
 J. F. Burton
 P. Cambell
 H. B. Camplin
 L. I. Carrington (per H.B.)
 S. H. Chalke
 Viscount Chaplin (per W.G.T.)
 G. M. Chapman
 M. R. Chettleburgh
 P. G. Clinkske
 Mrs. M. Cohen (per E.H.W.)
 J. M. Cooper
 N. Corker (per D.P.)
 S. Cramp
 R. da Cunha
 P. W. E. Currie
 Miss M. Curtis
- J. E. S. Dallas
 A. R. Daunton (per A.G.)
 M. S. Davenport
 Miss M. G. Davies
 Miss R. Davis
 P. Dehn
 P. W. Dickinson
 R. Dodson (per W.G.T.)
 C. C. Doncaster (per C.B.A.)
 I. K. Doncaster (per C.B.A.)
 M. Duke (per G.E.M.)
 D. M. Edwards (per J.F.B.)
 G. R. Edwards (per E.R.P.)
 K. V. Elphinstone
 Miss M. Englefield
 J. Farrand (J.Fd.)
 C. B. J. Feltham
 J. Field (J.Fld.)
 R. S. R. Fitter
 E. W. Flaxman
 Miss R. L. Ford
 Dr. J. Forster
 H. B. Fossey
 D. V. Freshwater
 J. T. Friendlein (per H.A.T.)
 L. C. J. Friend
 B. Frost
 J. J. Garr
 A. Gibbs
 D. T. Gibbs (per G.E.M.)
 E. H. Gillham
 F. C. Goode (per G.K.McC.)
 D. Goodwin
 Miss E. M. Goom
 Miss N. Goom
 G. C. Gore
 H. G. Gould
 Miss V. Gray (per G.E.M.)
 Mrs. E. A. Greenfield
 H. F. Greenfield
 P. Greenfield
 P. R. Griffiths
 Miss G. Groundsel (per W.G.T.)
 T. Guthrie (per C.H.F.P.)
 R. W. Hale
 D. G. Hall
 K. G. Harris
 C. J. O. Harrison
 Miss J. E. Harvey (per W.G.T.)
- W. A. Hastings
 R. S. Hatch
 P. J. Hayman
 R. W. Hayman (R.W.Hn.)
 S. T. Henderson
 A. J. Henty (A.J.Hy.)
 E. H. Herbert
 S. D. Herington
 Dr. W. C. W. C. Osman Hill
 Miss E. M. Hillman
 Miss R. Hilton
 L. G. Hoare (per W.G.T.)
 A. G. Hocken
 R. C. Hodgson (R.C.Hg.)
 A. J. Holcombe
 P. A. D. Hollom
 H. C. Holme
 F. J. Holroyde
 A. C. S. Holton (per R.C.H.)
 F. J. Holloway (per J.F.B.)
 R. C. Homes
 Eric Hosking
 N. M. How
 C. Hughes
 Lord Hurcomb
 C. E. Hutchings
 Miss R. L. Hyde (per W.G.T.)
 B. Jennings (per G.A.P.)
 Miss L. J. Johns
 A. E. Jolley
 F. H. Jones
 H. O. Jones
 J. L. Jones
 N. G. Blurton Jones (per J.D.W.)
 R. E. Jones
 S. Keon
 Mrs. H. M. Rait Kerr
 Major K. P. Keywood
 P. R. Knipe
 Dr. J. W. Landells
 Miss L. B. Langham
 Miss E. P. Leach
 J. C. Leach
 W. A. Leon (per C.H.F.P.)
 F. W. Lockwood
 Miss C. E. Longfield
 J. C. Lord
 Dr. G. Carmichael Low
 F. R. Mann
 Surg. Comdr. J. Mansell-Reese
 G. E. Manser

- Dr. A. Macpherson (per
W.G.T.)
A. Marshall
Mrs. J. Marston (per
R.W.Hn.)
M. Marston (per
R.W.Hn.)
Dr. R. G. Mayall
J. H. McCall
B. McGinnis
J. McHoul
H. P. Medhurst
R. A. S. Melluish
W. D. Melluish
Mrs. N. Millen (per
R.S.R.F.)
A. D. Miller
O. L. Miller
T. H. L. Mills
B. S. Milne
E. Milne-Redhead
F. J. L. Mitchell
W. N. Mitchell
H. C. Murray
H. F. Myers
E. M. Nicholson
E. T. Nicholson
I. C. T. Nisbet
T. G. Nordal
Miss E. M. A. Norris
E. C. Ormerod
Miss M. S. Van Oostveen
D. F. Owen
K. H. Palmer
R. J. Palmer (per
K.H.P.)
L. Parmenter
W. D. Park
D. Parr
E. R. Parrinder
J. L. F. Parslow
H. C. F. Parsons
D. E. Patten (D.E.Pt.,
per G.E.M.)
A. K. Patterson (per
G.E.M.)
J. R. Pattison (per
R.W.P.)
- R. M. Payne
D. B. Peakall
D. C. Pegram
G. T. Perkins (per
F.R.M.)
Miss E. Perry (per
T.L.B.)
A. V. Pettit
W. R. Philipson
B. P. Pickess
D. E. Pomeroy
H. E. Pounds
H. M. Pratt
N. H. Pratt
D. A. Preston
Mrs. I. Purdom
Miss M. Purdom
G. A. Pyman
B. A. Richards
J. N. A. Rignall
H. W. Rudd
Miss P. M. Rumbold
P. F. C. Rumsey
R. H. M. Ryall
B. L. Sage
Miss E. Sartoris
T. Sayers
G. L. Scott
Miss M. Scholey
F. Schweitzer (per
G.E.M.)
R. E. Sharland
W. S. Shipp
P. E. L. Simmonds
Eric Simms
H. G. Singleton
P. G. Smith
Dr. Stuart Smith
Dr. E. W. Snell
Mrs. E. Souter
R. W. Sowerby (per
H.F.G.)
S. J. Spence (per
W.G.T.)
R. Spencer
Miss K. E. Springett
Miss I. Stephenson (per
W.G.T.)
- N. F. Stewart (per
G.E.M.)
I. T. Stratford
D. F. Street
E. Sweeting (E.Sg., per
P.D.)
G. Taylor
J. E. Taylor
W. G. Teagle
A. G. G. Thompson
Dr. W. W. Thomson
H. A. Toombs
C. M. Vesey
W. G. Vincent
N. J. P. Wadley
J. M. Walker
D. I. M. Wallace
G. O. Warburg
J. H. Ward
L. A. Warman (per
T.L.B.)
Prof. E. H. Warmington
R. B. Warren
F. H. Waters
E. C. Watt
Mrs. E. M. Watt
Rev. A. J. Weaver (per
W.G.T.)
C. S. Webb (per W.G.T.)
R. A. Westerway (per
R.S.R.F.)
A. W. Wheeler
Miss P. Whiddington
C. A. White
K. P. Whitethorn (per
J.F.B.)
J. A. Wigzell
D. S. Wilson
H. T. M. Wilson
Dr. W. H. D. Wince
R. H. Winterbottom (per
G.E.M.)
J. D. Wood
G. Wright (per G.E.M.)
P. F. Yeo
Comdr. T. Yeoman (per
W.G.T.)
Mrs. J. McCombe Young
(per W.G.T.)

Birds of the London Area 1951

A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

THE number preceding the name of each species refers to Witherby's *Check-List of British Birds* (1941), where the full scientific name will be found. All records are for 1951 except where otherwise stated. The initials following each record indicate the observer(s) responsible for it. The six counties within the circle of twenty miles radius are indicated by their initials, viz.:—B = Bucks.; E = Essex; H = Herts.; K = Kent; M = Middlesex; S = Surrey. Records from the Thames between Richmond and Putney, and from the adjacent Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Reservoirs, are grouped under T owing to the frequent movements between these reservoirs and the river. The following abbreviations are also used:—*B.B.* = *British Birds* magazine; *L.B.R.* = *London Bird Report*; G.P. = gravel pit; Res. = reservoir; S.F. = sewage farm.

An open map of the London Area will be found useful for a full appreciation of many of the records. As the history of some of the species is intended to be continuous, reference to the systematic lists of previous issues of the *L.B.R.* is recommended.

2 Hooded Crow

E King George V Res., two on Mar. 4, one on Apr. 1 (A.E.J., H.W.R.).
M Poyle, one on Feb. 24 (S.T.H.). Ruislip Common, one on Feb. 11
(T.L.B., P.J.H.). Mill Hill, one on Dec. 17 (E.H.W.).
S Kew Gardens, one on Feb. 24 (J.W.L.).

3 Carrion-Crow

M/S Inner London, at least 21 pairs bred or attempted to breed.

11 Jay

M/S Inner London: nested in Kensington Gardens (at least three pairs), and Thurloe Square, South Kensington. Young seen in Brompton Cemetery, the Green Park, Regent's Park, St. James's Park, and St. John's Wood (many observers). In Kensington Gardens two pairs nested in holes in trees, but did not rear young. This is a new habit for Inner London, and is unusual in Britain (D.G.). On April 24 a bird was seen carrying nesting material to a site on the Foreign Office, but building operations were soon abandoned (A.J.Hy.).

14 Starling

The Starling Enquiry ended its work in April, 1952. A report is in preparation.

18 Hawfinch

Breeding records only are published.

- E Brentwood, two juveniles, July 19 (H.C.M.).
 M Breeding recorded from Harefield (B.P.P.); Highgate (E.H.W.); Ruislip, two pairs at least (T.L.B., N.H.P., C.A.W.); Stanmore, two pairs (E.H.W.); Hampstead Heath, one pair presumed breeding (G.T.). Inner London: Regent's Park, a family party of four or five, July 24-30. Adult feeding one fledgling on cherry stones on July 24. One juvenile on Aug. 9 (H.C.H., E.H.W.). St. James's Park, a juvenile on Aug. 22 (R.A.N.).
 K Catford, S.E.6, Forsters Park, one pair bred (J.J.G., D.E.Pt.). Chislehurst, one pair nested (F.J.H.).
 S Nested at Chipstead (L.I.C.), Dulwich Wood (J.S.S.B.), and Kew Gardens (J.W.L.).

20 Goldfinch

- M Inner London: fledged young seen in Brompton Cemetery, Chelsea Hospital grounds, and Regent's Park (M.C., E.sg., H.C.H.).

21 Siskin

- E Epping Forest, near Loughton, one on Dec. 26 (I.P.).
 H Watford S.F., four on Jan. 13 (P.R.K.).
 M Small parties up to a dozen birds reported during late winter and early spring from Bushy Park, Hampstead Heath, Harrow, Uxbridge and Whitewebbs Park. At Uxbridge numbers rose to 56 on Feb. 11 (R.E.J. and seven other observers).
 K Single birds reported from Beckenham, Darenth Wood, and Hayes between Jan. and Mar., and Oct. and Dec. Westerham, c. 20 on Mar. 18 (A.H.B., A.W.B., J.S.S.B., D.F.O., D.E.P.).
 S Godstone, c. 25 from Mar. 27 to 31 but only one on Apr. 6 (H.F.G., A.J.H., D.B.P.). Mitcham Common, one, December 1-22 (B.P.A., J.G.A.). Wimbledon Common, two on Feb. 2, ten on Feb. 10 (H.P.M., J.M.R.).

25 Lesser Redpoll

- M Hampstead, family party seen feeding in silver birches adjacent to the Heath, June 14 (J.F.W.B.).
 K Hayes and Orpington, one pair present at each place during breeding season (A.H.B.).
 S Tadworth, one pair with young in breeding season (H.B.).
 These are the only breeding-season records received for the whole Area. Small flocks were observed at the usual places throughout the winter months and a bird was seen by E.M.N. in St James's Park on Oct. 16.

30 Linnet

- M Inner London: Chelsea, two frequented Royal Hospital grounds during the breeding season (E.sg.).

[31 Serin

M Dollis Hill, a cock on Nov. 13 (E.S.). This bird was seen in a holm-oak, and from the description of plumage and note there is no doubt of its identity. It would not allow close approach, but the possibility that it was an escape cannot be ruled out.]

33 Bullfinch

M Inner London: Regent's Park, one on Sept. 11 (E.H.W.).

36 Crossbill

M Scratch Wood, a male feeding in pine trees, July 31 (E.H.W.).

42 Brambling

In most usual districts ones and twos stayed through the winter until early April. The largest flocks were one of *c.* 30 at West Wickham, Kent, on April 9 (A.W.B.), and a second of *c.* 100 which frequented the Selsdon and Sanderstead districts of Surrey during mid-March: one bird on Apr. 20—the latest date for the Area in 1951 (A.J.H., D.E.P.).

K Westerham, during February and March a flock of *c.* 3,000 birds frequented two acres of woodland to roost in rhododendron bushes. See *B.B.*, 44, p. 386.

43 Corn-Bunting

B Horton, one singing on Mar. 12 (P.F.Y.).

E Bulphan Fen, one or two pairs in breeding season (R.S.). Collier Row, one on June 22 (M.R.C.). Rainham district, up to 20 singing birds during breeding season. Romford S.F., a pair in July (R.S.).

H Rickmansworth, a male on June 16 (S.K.). Scratch Wood, one on Apr. 27 (E.H.W.).

M Bedfont, three singing males on Apr. 23 and one subsequently in May (I.C.T.N.). Ruislip Common, two on Jan. 3 (B.P.P., N.H.P.). Stanmore, one on Feb. 18 (E.H.W.). Staines, King George VI Res., one or two present from Apr. 21-July 1. Heathrow, one on May 27, two on June 30. Perry Oaks S.F., two on Mar. 23 increasing to four at end of July, when a flock of 10+ was seen (eight observers).

K Longfield, two pairs in breeding season (K.H.P.). South Darenth, a singing male on June 3 (W.I.B.). Records of singing males and proof of nesting have been received from Thames marshes between Abbey Wood and Stone (J.F.B.).

S Walton G.P., one on July 1 (D.P.).

44 Yellow Bunting

M Inner London: Regent's Park, a male on Dec. 21 (E.H.W.); St. John's Wood, a male on July 27 (H.M.R.K.).

49 Cirl Bunting

S Chipstead, a male on June 28 (D.B.P.). New Merstham, a pair, July 21 (S.K.). Woodmansterne, five on Mar. 25 (A.J.H.).

59 Snow-Bunting

M Brent Res., a male on Nov. 1 (E.H.W.).

S Dulwich Common, one on Nov. 3 (H.E.P.).

Full supporting details have been received for both these records.

62 Tree-Sparrow

Excluding Essex, flocks exceeding 30 birds were reported outside the breeding season from ten localities. Flocks exceeding 100 birds were seen at Perry Oaks S.F. during September and at Stone during March. 200-250 were present at Beddington S.F. from August until October.

E Bred at Sewardstone (four pairs, A.E.J.), Theydon Mount and Woodford (one pair at each place). Breeding also suspected at Navestock (M.R.C.).

H No definite breeding records, although flocks of c. 50 were seen during April at Watford S.F. and Radlett. On June 24 a flock of c. 30 adults and juveniles was seen at Old Parkbury G.P., Radlett (E.H.W.).

M One pair bred at Mill Hill (P.E.L.S.) and two pairs at Ruislip (B.P.P.).

K Dartford Marshes, several pairs bred in two colonies (J.F.B.). Elmers End S.F., two pairs nested (G.E.M.). Stone Marshes, two pairs nested (G.B.).

S An exceptional increase was recorded in the Beddington S.F. colony, where a count made during the breeding season revealed 44 nests. Nesting sites varied from holes in trees, under guttering, in a pumping station roof, to drain pipes along the sides of a culvert (B.S.M.). (cf. *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 12). Bred also at Ham G.P., one pair (F.R.M.). Walton-on-Thames, one pair probably bred (N.F.S.).

69 Wood-Lark

During 1951 at least 17 pairs were known to have bred out of a total of 27 pairs present during the breeding season. Although at first sight it would appear that breeding status has been maintained at the 1950 level, fewer non-breeding birds were reported during the past year. (See *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 12.)

E Epping Forest, one pair bred and a second pair was recorded during the breeding season (J.L.F.P., E.T.N.). In the district around Hainault Forest and Lambourne End, three pairs bred, and a fourth pair was present (M.R.C.).

H One record only: Totteridge, one on May 12 (E.H.W.).

M Ruislip district, three pairs bred (T.L.B., R.E.J., B.P.P., N.H.P.). Singing males also present in the breeding season at Bushy Park, Harefield, Harrow Weald, Mill Hill, Scratch Wood and Stanmore (many observers).

K Hayes Common, one pair bred and a second pair suspected (A.W.B., G.E.M.).

S Bred at Addington, two pairs (H.E.P.); Cobham, one pair (J.F.); Ham Common, two pairs (F.R.M.); Oxshott, one pair (H.J.H.); Reigate Heath, one pair and Walton Heath, two pairs (H.B.). Richmond Park, six pairs believed to have nested (R.W.HN.). At each of the following places pairs were seen during the breeding season: Banstead, Park Down; Fetcham Downs; South Croydon, Shirley Hills; and Wimbledon Common (five observers). Singing males were reported also from Limpsfield, Mickleham, and Whiteley (three observers).

81 Rock-Pipit

E Walthamstow Res., one on Jan. 7 (H.W.R.).

K Thames Marshes, Dartford to Stone, up to 12 birds present January to Feb. 24. From Sept. 23 until the end of the year one to three were regularly seen and 14 were recorded on Nov. 11. Swanscombe, up to 10 present during October (G.B., J.F.B., W.I.B., K.H.P.).

Variant Yellow Wagtails

During the third week of April at least eight Blue-headed Wagtails (*M. f. flava*) were recorded, mostly in migrant flocks of Yellow Wagtails (*M. f. flavissima*). Typical of these birds was a male at Staines on Apr. 20, showing the white chin and eye-stripe and the bluish-grey forehead, crown and nape. Similar birds were noted at Beddington S.F. during the same period. Also among these flocks, birds resembling the paler European forms were seen, seven being recorded from the Staines area and four from Beddington S.F.

88 Yellow Wagtail

E Barking, five or six pairs bred (M.R.C.). Nested at Sewardstone, Walthamstow Res. (P.F.C.R.), and Woodford (three pairs, M.R.C.).

H Nested at Old Parkbury G.P. (B.L.S., E.H.W.).

M Bedfont, one pair bred (I.C.T.N.). Brent Res., out of five pairs present, four were known to have bred (A.G., E.H.W.). Greenford, nine or ten pairs in the canal vicinity during May, four pairs feeding young on June 24 (F.H.J.). Mill Hill, two pairs nested—one pair rearing a Cuckoo (E.H.W.). Also bred at Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Moor, Staines Res., and Wormwood Scrubs (I.C.T.N., G.L.S., W.G.T.). At Staines, King George VI Res., a flock of c. 400 was seen on Apr. 29 (C.A.W.).

K Blackheath, a pair bred close to the main road (J.F.B.). Elmers End S.F., four pairs nested (G.E.M.). Thames Marshes, bred in small numbers on all marshes from Plumstead to Northfleet, several pairs nesting on the saltings at Northfleet and Swanscombe (J.F.B., W.I.B.).

S Barn Elms Res., two or three pairs bred (M.C., T.H.L.M., T.S.). Beddington S.F., a census of nesting birds revealed 18 breeding pairs (B.S.M.). Also bred at Epsom S.F., two pairs (H.B., A.W.W.); Ham G.P., two pairs (F.R.M.); Mitcham Common, one pair (J.G.A., *et al.*); Walton G.P., one pair (K.P.K.).

89 Grey Wagtail

- H Hamper Mill, a pair nested in the same place as reported in the *L.B.R.* for 1950, p. 15 (G.K.M.C., E.H.W.).
- M Near Harefield, a pair seen during the breeding season (C.A.W.). Osterley Park, the presence of an adult on June 5, and a juvenile on June 10, points to a pair having bred near by (G.C.L., I.C.T.N.).
- K Shoreham, one pair in known breeding haunt on June 20 (A.H.B.). Westerham, pair carrying food on Apr. 14 (A.J.H.).
- S Bedding S.F., breeding on or near the farm suspected; an adult was seen feeding young on Aug. 26 (B.S.M.). Epsom S.F., breeding probable, one adult and one juvenile on July 19 (H.B.). Esher, adult seen carrying food on June 10 (K.P.K.). Godstone, one pair bred (H.B.). Putney Vale, one pair bred (R.W.H.H.).

90 Pied Wagtail

- E Roding Valley, Oct.-Dec. roost in reed-bed with max. 150 birds during December (M.R.C.).
- M Inner London: Cripplegate, one pair nested (E.H.W.).
- K Crayford creek, c. 450 roosting in reed-bed, Aug. 14 (W.I.B.). The Hayes Common roost continued to be used throughout the year with a maximum of c. 50 birds during late April (G.E.M.). (See *L.B.R.*, 1948, 1949, 1950). Stone Marshes, April roost of 100-200 birds in reed-bed ((K.H.P.); 96 at the same roost on Oct. 16 (G.B.).
- S Barn Elms Res., 50-100 roosted in reeds during December (H.C.H.).

91 White Wagtail

- H Watford S.F., three on Apr. 16 (N.H.P.).
- M Staines area, two on Apr. 15, and one on various dates until Apr. 27 (eight observers).
- K Stone Marshes, one on Apr. 17 and 21 (K.H.P.).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 10, 12, 18 (A.J.H., D.I.M.W., A.G.G.T.). Beddington S.F., one on Mar. 31, Apr. 14, 18 (A.J.H., D.B.P., A.G.G.T.).

96 Nuthatch

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, a pair with at least three juveniles on July 24 (E.H.W.).

102 Coal-Tit

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, an adult with three barely fledged young, Aug. 2 (H.C.H.). This is only the second time that evidence of breeding has been obtained for Inner London.

108 Willow-Tit

- E Epping Forest, four on Sept. 9 (K.D.G.M.). South Weald, one on Jan. 8 (R.S.). Warley Gap, one on Nov. 17 (R.B.W.).
- H Cuffley, one on July 21 (L.J.J.). Radlett, one on Nov. 7 (E.H.W.).

M Ruislip Common, up to five birds were recorded during late winter and early spring. One pair nested but the hole was subsequently found ripped open and nesting material strewn on the ground (T.L.B., R.E.J., B.P.P., N.H.P.). Bentley Priory, one on Mar. 21 and Nov. 30 (E.H.W.). Denham Lock, one on Mar. 11 (C.A.W.). Harefield, one on Nov. 25 (W.G.T.). Stanmore Common, one on Apr. 8 (E.H.W.).

S Sanderstead, a presumed family party of six birds on July 26 (A.J.H.). Walton Heath, one on Mar. 1, a pair on Mar. 8 (H.B.).

114 Great Grey Shrike

M Bushy Park, one on Mar. 3 (W.G.T.). Ruislip district, the bird reported in 1950 (*L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 16) stayed until Mar. 4 (T.L.B., R.E.J., N.H.P.).

119 Red-backed Shrike

Of a total of 43 pairs or presumed pairs found in the London Area during the 1951 breeding season, 35 were known to have nested.

M Inner London: Regent's Park, a male on Aug. 16 and a female on Aug. 19 (H.C.H.). These are the second and third records for Inner London.

120 Waxwing

M Pinner, one seen for a few days in early December (R.W.).

S Raynes Park, two on Jan. 29, 1950 (M.D.). Wallington, one on Jan. 16, 1950 (L.B.F.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 17).

123 Pied Flycatcher

E Two spring records: Brentwood, one on May 10 (H.C.M.), and Buckhurst Hill, one on Apr. 19 (W.R.C.H.).

M Hampstead Heath, on spring migration a male was seen on several dates between Apr. 29 and May 11, and a female on May 12 and 13. During the autumn migration, one or two birds were seen on various dates between Aug. 29 and Sept. 11 (six observers).

Inner London: Regent's Park, a remarkable movement seems to have taken place, as birds were seen on numerous occasions between Aug. 31 and Sept. 11, with a maximum of 15 on Sept. 3. Single birds occurred in the Green Park on Sept. 1, 13, and 17, and in Kensington Gardens on Aug. 24 and 29-31 (several observers).

Other autumn migration records came from Mill Hill, one on July 29 and Aug. 9, and Staines, one on Sept. 3 (E.H.W.). At Wembley a male was heard in full song on Aug. 15 (R.H.M.R.).

K Catford, S.E.6, Forster's Park, two, Sept. 16-18 (J.J.G.).

S Peckham, S.E.15, a male, Apr. 28-30 (R.A.W.). Banstead Heath, one on Sept. 6 (H.B.). Barn Elms Res., one on Sept. 2 (H.C.H.). South Norwood, S.E.19, two on Oct. 4 (R.H.W.).

128 Firecrest

S Chipstead, one on Jan. 14 (L.I.C.). Full supporting details have been received.

135 Wood-Warbler

E The only records of breeding come from Epping Forest, where two nests were found (C.E.B., M.R.C., S.K.).

H Aldenham, a pair in the breeding season (M.C.H., W.D.M.).

M Hampstead Heath, one pair bred (J.F.W.B.). Nesting also reported from Bentley Priory, Harrow Weald and Stanmore Common (G.C.G., E.H.W.).

K Hayes Common, two pairs bred (A.W.B., G.E.M.).

S Birds were present at the following places during the nesting season:—Bookham (three singing males, G.B.); Oxshott Heath and Woods (three pairs, J.F.); Reigate (one in full song on July 6, H.B.); Shirley Hills, South Croydon (three singing males during June, G.E.M.); Wimbledon Common (seven singing males on June 10, D.C.P.). Three observers state that the year 1951 was a "poor year" for the species in the usual Kent and Surrey breeding haunts.

145 Grasshopper-Warbler

H Croxley, one on May 24 (H.F.G.). Elstree, one disturbed from typical nesting habitat on June 15 (E.H.W.). Radlett, one on May 13 (M.C.H.).

K Stone Marshes, one on May 12 (H.C.H.).

S Bookham Common, a singing male between June 24 and July 21 (G.B., E.M.H., J.M.R.).

149 Reed-Warbler

E Navestock Park Lake, several pairs in the breeding season (M.R.C.). Rainham district, four in song at mouth of R. Ingrebourne on June 16 and young seen at Berwick Pond, Aug. 6. South Ockenden, several in song, Aug. 6. Upminster, Gerpins Lane G.P., one in song, May 19 (R.B.W.).

H Moor Mill, two pairs during the breeding season. Old Park-bury, one singing male during May and June (E.H.W.).

M Nested at Osterley Park (F.R.M.), Poyle (R.S.H.), Staines Moor (R.W.H.N.). Circumstantial evidence points to breeding at Ruislip Lido (B.P.P., N.H.P.) and Tottenham Lock (K.S.H.).

K The breeding population appears to be maintained on all the Thames marshes from Abbey Wood to Northfleet at the same level as reported in *L.B.R.*, 1950, with the colony at Abbey Wood at 130-150 pairs, and at least another 50-60 pairs on the marshes between Erith and Northfleet (G.B., J.F.B., W.I.B., K.H.P.). Ruxley G.P., two or three pairs bred (F.J.H.).

S Although no nests were found, observers were confident that birds bred at Barn Elms Res., Epsom S.F., Ham G.P., and Richmond Park (A.J.H., R.H., H.B., A.W.W., F.R.M.).

154 Aquatic Warbler

M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Aug. 25 and 26. This bird was first seen by H.C.H. and a companion, and later by A.G., I.C.T.N. and C.A.W. (See *B.B.*, 45, p. 416).

163 Whitethroat

A bird ringed by T.L.B. at Ruislip on 6.vii.50 was found dead at Cherbourg, France, on 6.v.51.

174 Mistle-Thrush

M Inner London: Temple, a pair nested on some tubular scaffolding and reared young (r.s.).

178 Redwing

K Stone Marshes, large flocks observed during January and early February. On Feb. 4 some 3,000 were present with c. 400 Fieldfares in the hawthorn thickets all over the marshes (J.F.B.).

182 Ring-Ouzel

M Hampstead Heath, one on Apr. 14 (P.W.D.). Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on May 19 (J.M., M.M.), the second record for Inner London. Ruislip, one on Apr. 19 (N.H.P.). Staines Res., a male on Mar. 26 and 27 (P.J.H., N.H.P.). Autumn migration: Harefield, one on Oct. 1 (B.P.P.).

S Richmond Park, one, Apr. 8-10 (P.G.C.). Walton Heath, one or two birds seen between Sept. 19 and Oct. 12, with seven on Oct. 4 and ten on Oct. 8 (H.B.). The Committee has received full supporting details of all these records.

186/187 Wheatear

Passage through the Area lasted from Mar. 15 until May 29 in the spring, and from July 29 until Oct. 5 in the autumn.

191/192 Black-eared Wheatear

M Inner London: Regent's Park, a male on Apr. 23 (H.C.H.). This bird was seen later the same day by E. Simms whose drawing and description confirmed the identification. The first observer saw the bird on the lower branch of a bush and at once noticed that the black mark through the eye was unusually large for a wheatear. Further examination showed the breast bright pinkish, the mantle dark brown and the tail with much white in it. In flight the bird appeared strikingly patterned. Between sallies for food it often returned to a low branch of a bush or tree. Though there was a divergence in the two observers' descriptions of the throat, it would appear to have been the black-throated variety of this dimorphic species. This is the first record for the London Area of a bird which has been taken or observed less than thirty times in Britain.

197 Whinchat

- E Nested at Brentwood S.F. (R.B.W.), Fairlop (M.R.C.), and Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.). Barking, Ripple Level, a pair obviously with nest on June 16 and three others at different places on Hornchurch Marshes on the same date (R.B.W.).
- H Bred at Cheshunt (B.L.S.), and at Watford S.F. (E.H.W.). Rickmansworth, adult seen with an immature bird on July 2 (H.F.G.).
- M Nested at Northolt (A.G.H.) and at Perry Oaks S.F. where at least two pairs bred (several observers). On the west side of King George VI Res. and on Staines Moor, at least four pairs bred (N.H.P., C.A.W., E.H.W.).
- K Abbey Wood Marshes, one pair nested. Stone Marshes, three pairs reared young (G.B., J.F.B., K.H.P.). Farningham, Maplescombe Valley, a pair seen carrying food on Sept. 2 (W.I.B.).
- S Walton G.P., one pair bred successfully (R.C.H.G.). This is the first breeding record for Surrey since 1938 (*vide L.B.R.*, 1938, p. 10).

198 Stonechat

Winter records have been received from many widely separated parts of the Area. Ones and twos were seen from the beginning of the year until mid-March and again from the middle of September until December.

- E Rainham, one pair believed to have bred (R.S.).
- K Plumstead Marshes, one pair probably bred on inaccessible land (J.F.B.).

201 Redstart

Breeding season records only are published.

- E Bred in Epping Forest, where the species is reported as "now relatively plentiful" (J.W.A., S.K.). Nesting also recorded from Hainault Forest and South Weald Park. At Brentwood and Warley, birds were present in the breeding season (M.R.C., R.S., R.B.W.).
- H Cuffley Great Wood, six pairs in June (B.L.S.).
- K Lullingstone Park, two pairs bred. Westerham, three pairs in the breeding season (J.S.S.B.).
- S Ashtead, two pairs bred. Richmond Park, nested (A.W.W.). Limpsfield Chart, female seen with a juvenile on June 25 (J.F.).

202 Black Redstart

See special note on pp. 32-34.

220 Swallow

- S Beddington S.F., an early arrival stayed from Mar. 24 to Apr. 2 (A.J.H., D.E.P.).

227 Nightjar

- E Epping Forest, recorded during the breeding season (A.E.J., H.W.B.).
 K Darenth Wood, at least four pairs in the breeding season (K.H.P.).
 Hayes Common, one heard and seen in display flight, May 24 (A.H.B.), but not seen after June 7 (G.E.M.).
 S Headley Heath, one pair bred (H.B.). Present at Ham Common and Limsfield Chart during the nesting season (A.J.Hy., E.W.F., D.E.P.).
 Richmond Park, not more than one heard between May 28 and June 20. Did not breed (R.W.Hn.).

232 Hoopoe

- K Lewisham, S.E.6, one, Aug. 27 and 28; seen on both days feeding on the observer's lawn (K.P.W.).
 S Epsom, one, June 18, on a lawn in Ashley Road (L.I.C.). Norbury, S.W.16, one from Sept. 13 to 17 in suburban gardens (A.R.D.).

237 Great Spotted Woodpecker

- M Inner London: Bethnal Green, one in Meath Gardens, a small open space half a mile south of Victoria Park, on Aug. 13 (R.B.W.). This is the first record of this species in Inner London east of the City.

239 Wryneck

- E Woodford, one found dead, July 25 (M.R.C.).
 H Park Street, a pair in mid-May was reported to have been there since the end of April (E.H.W.).
 K Bexleyheath, one on Apr. 9 (W.W.). Longfield, one on Apr. 15 (J.S.S.B.). Orpington, calling throughout the breeding season (R.B.).
 S Purley, one pair bred (J.M.C., A.G.). Pairs were present during the breeding season at Chipstead (L.I.C.), Leatherhead (young heard, July 18, S.H.C., J.E.S.D.), Tadworth (H.B.). Also recorded from Bantstead (May 25, L.I.C., June 30, A.F.M.), Cobham (May 3, N.C.), Epsom Downs (Sept. 3, H.B.), and between Purley and Coulsdon (May 28, P.G.).

250 Long-eared Owl

- S Chipstead, one seen in a garden plantation, "ears" clearly visible, Feb. 22 (L.I.C.).

251 Short-eared Owl

- E Rainham Marshes, one on several dates between January and March (J.M.A.); one, Apr. 8 (R.S.).
 H Watford S.F., one, Mar. 23-26 and Aug. 2-3 (B.P.P., N.H.P.).
 M Hampstead Heath, one on Nov. 3 and 4. The first record for the Heath (G.T.). Harmondsworth, two, Apr. 2 (F.H.J.). Perry Oaks S.F., one, Mar. 25 (R.H.M.R.).
 K Stone Marshes, one, Jan. 14 (W.I.B.).
 S Beddington S.F. and Mitcham Common, the bird reported in *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 23, was again seen on Jan. 7 (B.P.A., J.G.A.). One on Nov. 24 and one from Dec. 23 until the end of the year (B.S.M., A.J.H., C.J.O.H.).

259 Peregrine Falcon

- M Brent Res., one, Jan. 20 (E.S.). Hampstead Heath, one, Apr. 20 (H.M.R.K.). Littleton, one, Aug. 5 (R.dac.). Staines Res. and Moor, single birds were present from mid-Jan. until Apr. 3 (many observers). During this period a female with a bell on its leg was seen in the area and towards the end associated with a tiercel. A female was also seen at King George VI Res. on May 20 and single birds on Oct. 7 and Dec. 9 (C.A.W.).
- M/S Inner London: Newgate Street, E.C., one flying low, Oct. 18 (W.R.P.B.). St. John's Wood, one over Lord's, May 12 (H.M.R.K.). South Bank Exhibition Site, two on May 4 (H.C.H.).
- K Dartford Marshes, a male, Mar. 4 (J.F.B.). Stone Marshes, one on three dates in January (W.I.B., K.H.P.). Two watched circling over Littlebrook Power Station, Oct. 28 (W.I.B.).

261 Hobby

- H Watford S.F., one, Aug. 20 (N.H.P.).
- M Staines and Perry Oaks area, a pair with swifts over Staines Moor, May 5 (E.H.W.). Single birds were seen between Aug. 18 and Sept. 9, and two were present at Perry Oaks S.F. on Aug. 25 (five observers). Stanwell, one, Sept. 23 (H.A.B.).

262 Merlin

- M Harlington, one, July 14 (H.A.B.). Mill Hill, a female on Jan. 14 (E.H.W.). Staines Moor and Reservoirs, one on Jan. 6 (A.G.H., C.A.W.), Jan. 27 (B.P.P., N.H.P.), and Sept. 18 (I.C.T.N.). Perry Oaks S.F., a female, Apr. 1 (R.H.M.R.).
- S Epsom S.F., one, Jan. 9 (H.B.).

263 Kestrel

A nestling ringed in Richmond Park by R. W. Hayman on 15.vi.48 was shot at Coln Street, St Aldwyns, Glos., 29.v.51.

268/9 Buzzard sp.

- H Cuffley, one circling above Cuffley Great Wood, Apr. 21 (B.L.S.).

271 Marsh-Harrier

- E Epping Long Green, one on Sept. 22 (H.W.R.). This bird, with greyish buff markings about the head, was thought to be a female or immature male.

272/3 Montagu's Harrier/Hen-Harrier

- M Inner London: Regent's Park, a female or immature on Sept. 8 (D.I.M.W.).

284 Osprey

- M Four separate occurrences: Poyle G.P. and Ruislip, one, May 14 and Sept. 23 (B.P.P., N.H.P., W.G.T.). Staines Moor and Reservoirs, one on Aug. 12 (C.C.D., I.K.D.), and one on Aug. 26 (D.G., R.W.H.N.).

K Ruxley G.P., one seen fishing, Oct. 23 (A.K.P.).

Satisfactory details have been received for all the above birds.

289 Common Heron

E Little Parndon, 12 occupied nests (W.C.D., E.T.N.). Walthamstow Res., 67 occupied nests (L.B., A.G., E.A.J., H.W.R.). Wanstead Park, four pairs nested (G.W.).

M Kempton Park, 93 occupied nests (N.G.). Osterley Park, one pair reared young (I.C.T.N.).

S Gatton Park, 10 pairs nested; again none at Godstone (H.B.). Richmond Park, 18 occupied nests (R.W.H.N.).

The total for the London Area was 205 occupied nests. Excluding Little Parndon, Osterley Park and Gatton Park, the total was 182, which shows an increase of 11 per cent. over the previous year. The comparable figures for the four largest heronries previously under consideration were: 1946, 134; 1947, 118; 1948, 122; 1949, 146; 1950, 164 (*cf.* L.B.R., 1948, p. 17; 1949, p. 23; 1950, p. 24). See also *B.B.*, 45, p. 64.

[295 Night Heron

M Brent Res., one, Apr. 25 (R.H.M.R.). This bird, seen in the late afternoon, was in an unusual plumage phase. From the notes received there seems little doubt of the species, with which the observer is familiar abroad, but as the bird was only seen in poor light and not in flight, square brackets are used in agreement with the observer.]

303/7 Grey Geese (species not determined)

M Stanwell, 12 geese flying west during the morning (D.I.M.W.) were later seen over Staines Moor (G.M.).

T Barn Elms Res., one passing high, Jan. 27 (A.G.G.T.); eight flying west into the setting sun, Dec. 30 (A.G., H.C.H.).

314 Canada Goose

E Little Belhus G.P., South Ockenden, one on Oct. 27 (R.S. *et al.*).

S Walton G.P., four on May 5 (R.C.Hg.).

315 Sheld-Duck

E Aveley and Rainham Marshes, a pair from Apr. 8 to June 16 (R.S., R.W.B.). Edmonton Res., nine flying south, May 26 (H.C.H.).

M Staines Moor and Reservoirs, single birds seen Jan. 21, Feb. 25 and 27. A pair on Staines Moor and King George VI Res. between Mar. 4 and Apr. 21, when four birds were seen. Single birds were reported Apr. 27 and Sept. 21, and two on June 2 (twelve observers).

K Stone Marshes, "small party" reported by a farmer on Jan. 27. Swanscombe Marshes, a juvenile, July 26, and a party of nine from Aug. 3-6 (J.F.B., K.H.P.).

S Beddington S.F., one in a flooded field, Apr. 7 (A.J.H.).

317 Mallard

A juvenile ringed at St. James's Park by E. Höhn on 8.vii.44 was found dead in a static water tank in Victoria, S.W.1, April 1951.

318 Gadwall

M Littleton, Queen Mary Res., a duck on Jan. 7 (R.dac.). Kempton Res., a pair on Sept. 30 (R.w.HN.). Staines Res., one on Oct. 21, two on Oct. 27 (D.A.P., C.M.V.).

S Richmond Park, one on Oct. 27, 28 and Nov. 3; a pair, Dec. 16 (P.C., R.w.HN.). The first records for Richmond Park since 1935.

T Barn Elms Res., at least two pairs bred (A.G.G.T.). Maximum of 42 on Mar. 11. From September to the end of the year numbers fluctuated between 12 and 26.

319 Teal

S Epsom S.F., a nest containing 18 eggs, of which 15 hatched. This was believed to be the laying of two ducks (H.B.).

322 Garganey

E Rainham, Berwick Pond, a pair during April and again on May 14; one, July 31 (M.J.A., R.S. *et al.*).

M Brent Res., a pair on Aug. 14 and one on Sept. 2 (A.G., E.H.W.). Poyle, Staines Moor and Reservoirs area: a drake was seen on Apr. 20 on King George VI Res.; on Apr. 28 and 29 and again on May 6, a pair was seen on Staines Moor and at Poyle; on May 15 a drake was seen at Poyle. At Perry Oaks S.F. two were seen on Aug. 19, and six were recorded for King George VI Res. on the same day. Two were recorded at Perry Oaks S.F. on Sept. 2 and four were at King George VI Res. on Sept. 14. Staines Moor, one, Sept. 22 (many observers).

S Walton G.P., three on Apr. 22 and May 6; a drake, June 2, and two pairs on nearby flooded land, June 3 (R.C.Hg., D.P.).

T Barn Elms Res., a drake on May 12 (S.K.).

323 Wigeon

M Since 1937 C.A.W. has often seen small parties on the Staines reservoirs during April, and sometimes in May. In 1951, however, three pairs stayed throughout the breeding season. See *B.B.*, 45, p. 419.

325 Pintail

H Rickmansworth, Stocker's Lake, two drakes on Feb. 18 (R.E.J.).

M Staines Res., a drake, Sept. 23 and Oct. 1 (I.C.T.N., C.M.V.).

T Lonsdale Road Res., one on Dec. 28 (D.I.M.W.).

326 Shoveler

E Rainham, Berwick Pond, one adult and three young on July 31 (R.S.).

M Staines area, five or six pairs in the breeding season, but there was no proof of nesting.

[327 Red-crested Pochard

M Inner London, full-winged birds dispersed from St. James's Park were seen as follows:—one on the Round Pond, Kensington Gardens on Mar. 16, one on canal basin, Warwick Avenue on May 8, and up to six on the Round Pond between Sept. 20 and Oct. 15 (several observers). (See *B.B.*, 45, p. 105).

T Barn Elms Res., the drake reported for Dec. 30 and 31, 1950, was recorded on fourteen days between Jan. 1 and 29. A drake was also seen on Feb. 6 and 10 (many observers). See also *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 27.]

329 Ferruginous Duck

K Dartford and Stone Marshes: a male first observed on Jan. 23, was seen on various dates until Feb. 7; two drakes, in company with Tufted Duck, allowed close approach, March 4 (*J.F.B.*, *W.I.B.*, *K.H.P. et al.*). Full field notes have been received (see also *B.B.*, 44, pp. 352-354).

S Gatton Park, a drake, Dec. 30. The diagnostic features of light eye and white under tail coverts were clearly seen (*D.B.P.*).

330 Tufted Duck

S Gatton Park, two broods seen on July 26—"the first breeding record since the war" (*H.B.*).

K Stone Marshes, summering birds apparently made no attempt to breed (*J.F.B.*).

331 Scaup-Duck

M Staines Res., a drake on Mar. 25, two drakes, May 12, and one on May 19. A duck, Dec. 23 (*R.H.M.R. et al.*).

T Barn Elms Res., up to seven between Jan. and Mar. 30 (many observers).

332 Goldeneye

E King George V Res., eight, Mar. 4, and one, Mar. 14. Walthamstow Res., one on Dec. 30 (*J.L.F.P.*, *H.W.R.*).

M Brent Res., one, Apr. 14-19 (*A.G.*). Cheshunt G.P., a duck on Feb. 23 (*J.L.F.P.*). Kempton Park, one on Feb. 4, two on Mar. 4 and one on Dec. 30. Littleton, Queen Mary Res., one on Jan. 7, three on Dec. 2 and eight on Dec. 30 (*R.dac.*). Staines Res., up to five during January and early February. Twenty-five on Feb. 25 rising to 40 in March, with maximum of 44+ on Mar. 31; last recorded, 11 on Apr. 22. One on Nov. 25 and ten on Dec. 1 (many observers).

K Ruxley G.P., three, Mar. 17 (*D.M.E.*).

S Molesey Res., 11 on Jan. 27, one on Nov. 25, and two, Dec. 30 (*G.C.G.*).

T Barn Elms Res., seen in ones and twos from January until March, and from November to the end of the year.

334 Long-tailed Duck

- M Brent Res., one, a female or juvenile, from Nov. 18 until the end of the year (six observers). Ruislip Res., one, Nov. 18 (R.G.M. *et al.*).
- T Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Reservoirs, one seen frequently from Nov. 22 to the end of the year (many observers). Although only one duck was seen on each occasion, descriptions received suggest that two different birds were frequenting these waters at this time.

339 Common Scoter

- S Beddington S.F., one very tired bird resting on the edge of a sludge pan, Oct. 28 (B.S.M.).
- T Barn Elms Res., two, May 2 (J.S.S.B., A.G.G.T.).

340 Velvet-Scoter

- M Staines Reservoir, one immature from Oct. 25-28, and again on Nov. 17 and Dec. 9 (R.G.M., C.A.W. *et al.*).

342 Goosander

- E King George V Res., maximum of 13 on Mar. 4 (H.W.R., J.L.F.P., P.F.S.R.).
- H Aldenham Res., one, Jan. 27 (E.H.W., B.L.S.).
- M Brent Res. one on Jan. 20 (R.E.J.) and one on Dec. 22 (A.G.). Littleton, Queen Mary Res., maximum of 36 on Mar. 4. Kempton Res., nine during February and March (R.dac.). Staines Reservoirs, a maximum of 20 recorded for the first part of the year on Jan. 14, and 24 on Dec. 23 (P.J.H., C.A.W. *et al.*).
- S Ham G.P., four on Jan. 19 and Mar. 20 (F.R.M.). Island Barn Res., 79 on Jan. 14, and c. 45 on Feb. 25. One on Dec. 2 and 30 (D.P.).
- T Barn Elms Res., a maximum of 15 on Feb. 25 (H.C.H.). Thames at Kingston, 16-20 in January-March, all birds leaving by Apr. 12 (R.C.Hg.).

344 Smew

Correction. In *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 56, the figure of 48 Smew at Staines in the winter, 1946-47, should refer to the winter, 1945-46.

- E Walthamstow Res., maximum of 13 on Jan. 14 (H.W.R.).
- H Aldenham Res., up to 10 between Jan. 27 and Feb. 4 (E.H.W., B.L.S.).
- M Recorded as usual from the reservoirs and sheets of open water with a maximum of 119 at Brent Res. on Feb. 10 and from 60 to 100 during February and early March. At Poyle G.P. good views were obtained of an adult male diving on June 2. The bird showed no signs of injury and had gone the next day (C.A.W.).
- S Ham G.P., two red-headed birds, Jan. 17, were joined by two drakes on Jan. 19 (F.R.M.). Walton G.P., two, Mar. 18 (D.P.).
- T At Barn Elms Res., a maximum of 93 was recorded on Jan. 21 (E.W.F.); there were 55 on Dec. 28 (D.I.M.W.).

346 Cormorant

The seasonal status of this species remains unchanged. Up to seven birds frequented the Thames and adjacent reservoirs from January to March and from late September to the end of the year. At Syon Marsh birds were again observed perching in the riverside trees.

On the reservoirs of Brent, Littleton and Staines, no birds were seen during July and August, but maxima of 11 were recorded during February, March, September and December.

Within the Society's Area as a whole, birds were seen in all months except July.

370 Great Crested Grebe

See page 37 for the annual report on the status of this species in the London Area.

371 Red-necked Grebe

E Rainham, one on the Thames, July 29 (R.S.).

M Staines, King George VI Res., one on Sept. 30. Great Crested and Black-necked Grebes were on the water for comparison (W.N.M., C.A.W.).

374 Black-necked Grebe

M Brent Res., two from Aug. 5-25 (S.K.). Single birds observed on Sept. 2, Oct. 21, and Nov. 20 (E.H.W.). Littleton, Queen Mary Res., one, Jan. 7 and Dec. 2 (R.DAC., D.U.F.). Staines, King George VI Res., up to nine from July 14 until Oct. 28 (many observers).

T Barn Elms Res., one, Mar. 4 and 22 (A.J.H., J.MCH.).

375 Little Grebe

M/S Autumn flocking movements again reported from Brent Res. where there were 50-60 birds at the end of September, numbers falling to 20 during December. At Walton G.P. about 20 were recorded at the end of August and 21 on Oct. 7 (several observers).

376 Great Northern Diver

M Brent Res., one, Nov. 22 (P.J.H., G.T.). Staines Res., one from Dec. 15-29 (many observers).

T Barn Elms Res., one seen on six dates between Nov. 17 and 27, and on most days of December (many observers).

378 Black-throated Diver

M Staines, King George VI Res., one on Apr. 20 (B.P.P., N.H.P.).

Satisfactory details have been received of this bird, which was in winter plumage, but clearly showed the yellow base of the bill.

379 Red-throated Diver

M Staines Res., one Mar. 26 (P.G.C., B.P.P., N.H.P.).

K Stone Marshes, between Jan. 1 and Feb. 24, at least four birds were found dead—believed shot. It appears that eight different birds visited the marshes during that period. One, Nov. 11 (J.F.B., W.I.B., K.H.P., J.H.MCC.).

380 Wood-Pigeon

M/S Inner London: at least four pairs nested or attempted to nest on buildings; Queen Court, W.C.1, 55 Broadway and Caxton House, S.W.1 and on the G.P.O. Headquarters, E.C.1. A pair nested unsuccessfully on some scaffolding on Duck Island, St. James's Park (S.C., H.E.P., G.T., W.G.T. *et al.*).

381 Stock-Dove

M Inner London: Kensington Gardens, 25 counted on Mar. 28 (E.S., W.G.T.).

386 Bar-tailed Godwit

M Staines Moor, one in winter plumage, Apr. 27-29 (F.H.J., I.C.T.N., D.A.P., G.L.S.).

387 Black-tailed Godwit

M Perry Oaks S.F., one in full summer plumage on July 17 (P.J.H.).

389 Whimbrel

H Rickmansworth, one heard passing over, May 3 (H.F.G.).

M On spring passage: Staines Moor, one, May 3; three, May 5 and 12 (A.J.H., A.J.Hy., I.C.T.N., D.E.P., C.A.W.). In the autumn single birds were recorded at Brent Res. (Sept. 2, E.H.W.), Perry Oaks S.F. (Aug. 4, H.F.G.), and Wembley (Aug. 13, R.H.M.R.).

393 Woodcock

E Hainault Forest, one on Jan. 14, Mar. 4, and Apr. 1 (M.R.C.). Harts Wood, one, Dec. 25 (H.C.M.).

M Ruislip, up to three seen and heard regularly from Apr. 9 until mid-June and probably bred. Also recorded from this area on Mar. 3 (T.L.B., B.P.P., N.H.P.). Bentley Priory, one on Mar. 21 (E.H.W.). Hampstead Heath, one on Mar. 15, 25 and 26, and again on Nov. 18 (K.E.S., G.T.). Ken Wood, two, Jan. 19 (W.S.S.). Mill Hill, one on Dec. 16 (P.E.L.S.).

K Joyden's Wood, one, Nov. 14 (R.J.P.).

S Ham Common, one on Mar. 20 (F.R.M.). Richmond Park, one on Mar. 2 (R.W.HN.). Selsdon, one found dead, Dec. 15 (A.J.H.). Walton Heath, one on Jan. 14 (E.H.H.).

395 Common Snipe

Breeding records only are published.

H Radlett, Moor Mill, one pair bred successfully (B.L.S.).

M Edmonton Res., nest with four eggs found on May 26 (H.C.H.).

K Abbey Wood Marshes, at least one pair nested, possibly two (J.F.B.).

S Beddington S.F., two pairs bred (B.S.M.).

398 Jack Snipe

- H Old Parkbury, one on Jan. 13 (E.H.W.). Watford S.F., numbers rose from six birds at the beginning of January to thirteen on Mar. 10, when eleven were flushed from one small flooded area 50 yds. by 20 yds. Numbers fell to three by Apr. 2 and two were seen on Apr. 16. One, Dec. 23 (B.P.P., N.H.P.).
- M Hampstead Heath, one on Mar. 3 (G.T.). Perry Oaks S.F., one, Oct. 21 (A.G., C.A.W., R.H.M.R.). Ponders End S.F., one on Oct. 27 (J.L.F.P.). Staines Moor, one, Apr. 11 (N.H.P.).
- K Elmers End S.F., two on Jan. 14 and three on Oct. 14, 21 and 28 (G.E.M.).
- S Beddington S.F., one on Jan. 3 and Apr. 12. Up to three birds on several dates between Sept. 20 and Oct. 7. On Oct. 8, with a large influx of Common Snipe fourteen Jacks were noted. Up to seven between Oct. 9 and Nov. 11. One between Dec. 23 and 26 (A.J.H., B.S.M.). Epsom S.F., one on Nov. 3 (A.W.W.).

400 Grey Phalarope

- T Barn Elms Res., one, thought to be a bird of the year, Sept. 9 and 10 (J.MCH., G.C.L.).

400/401 Phalarope sp.

- T Inner London: a bird swimming on the Thames near Tower Bridge on Sept. 2 was watched from a launch at a range of five yards, and was identified as a phalarope. From the detailed description submitted it would appear to have been *Phalaropus fulicarius* (A.C.S.H.). This is the first record of a phalarope for Inner London.

402 Turnstone

- M Perry Oaks S.F., two, May 12 (A.J.HY., I.C.T.N., T.S., W.G.T.), one on Aug. 12 (C.A.W. *et al.*). Ponders End S.F., two in breeding plumage on May 10 (J.L.F.P.).
- T Barn Elms Res., two on May 16 (A.G.G.T.).

403 Knot

- M Perry Oaks S.F., one, Sept. 14 (N.H.P.). Staines Moor, one, Mar. 26 (P.J.H.).
- K Stone Marshes, one resting with Dunlin on a jetty at high tide, Jan. 7 (J.F.B., K.H.P.).

404/5 Dunlin

- E Aveley Marsh, one, Apr. 28 (R.B.W.). Walthamstow Res., one flew over calling, May 16 (G.R.E.).
- M Ponders End S.F., one, Apr. 15; three, May 20. Here autumn passage lasted from the end of August to the first week in September, with a maximum of 25 birds on Aug. 31 (J.L.F.P.). Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Moor, and Reservoirs: only three winter records, one bird Feb. 21; two, Mar. 25; and one, Dec. 9. Spring passage spread

from Apr. 20 until May 23 in this area, with a maximum of eight birds at Perry Oaks on May 5. No birds were seen until July 27 and 29, when five were recorded. Ten birds were present on Aug. 9, increasing to 37 on Aug. 11 and 12. These numbers fell slightly but were maintained at between 15-20 for the next two weeks, dropping to 10 by early September. Parties of twos and threes were noted up to Oct. 6.

K Stone Marshes, birds were seen on four winter dates, Jan. 7 (three), Feb. 12 (c. 50 resting on jetty at high tide), Mar. 4 (five), and Nov. 11 (two). No spring movement was noticed but three were seen on July 19, and one on Aug. 9 (G.B., J.F.B., W.I.B., K.H.P.).

S Beddington S.F., two on Apr. 30 and Aug. 26 (B.S.M.). Walton G.P., two, May 6 (D.P.).

T Barn Elms Res., one, Apr. 13 (N.H.P.). Single birds were also seen on the following dates:—July 23, Aug. 24, 25 and 30. There were six on Aug. 31 (six observers).

406 Curlew-Sandpiper

M Perry Oaks S.F., one to three on various dates from Aug. 10 to Sept. 3. Two, Oct. 7 (six observers). No large numbers were recorded during the autumn passage as in 1950. (See *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 34).

407 Little Stint

M Brent Res., one on Sept. 9 (E.H.W.). Perry Oaks S.F., one, the only spring record, May 3 (T.L.B.) Two, Aug. 8 (W.N.M.). One from Sept. 11 to 15, and from Sept. 28 until Oct. 3 (seven observers), and again on Oct. 20 (R.dac.).

409 Temminck's Stint

T Barn Elms Res., one, May 12 and 13 (B.A.R., A.G.G.T.). Field notes have been received; the bib, white outer tail feathers and call were noted.

411 American Pectoral Sandpiper

M Perry Oaks S.F., one on most dates between Aug. 31 and Sept. 10 (P.A.D.H., E.R.P. *et al.*). See *B.B.*, 45, p. 294.

416 Sanderling

M *Spring Migration*. Staines, King George VI Res., one, May 19; eight, May 20; and one, May 30 (W.N.M., B.P.P., C.A.W.).

Autumn Migration. Perry Oaks S.F., single birds July 26, Aug. 10, 15 and 16, and Sept. 4. Staines, King George VI Res., two in summer plumage on July 8 and one on July 29, Aug. 18, and Sept. 14 (seven observers).

T Barn Elms Res., two stayed from Aug. 31 to Sept. 4 (J.MCH.).

417 Ruff

- E Girling Res., ten, three and seven on Sept. 4, 9 and 16 respectively (E.R.P., E.S.).
- M Perry Oaks S.F. No spring records. On return migration single birds were seen between Aug. 17 and 31. During September birds were reported on all but eight days. Parties up to six were seen during the first three weeks but only single birds after Sept. 20. In October one or two birds on six dates between the 1st and 21st. Ponders End S.F., one on Aug. 31, rising to twelve on Sept. 5. Five or six from Sept. 8 to 22; one, Oct. 14 (J.L.F.P.).
- S Beddington S.F., single birds on Aug. 12 and Sept. 9 (B.S.M., D.P.).

421 Common Sandpiper

Spring passage occurred in the London Area between Apr. 18 and May 23 when the largest number seen was ten at Perry Oaks S.F. on May 5, and eleven at Staines, King George VI Res. on May 19. *Autumn migration* lasted from July 14 until mid-October. The peak of this return migration was reached in the second and third weeks of August. During this period flocks of 15 and more were seen along the foreshore of the Thameside marshes, where 37 were reported on Aug. 18. At Staines, fifteen were seen at King George VI Res. on July 28 and twelve on Aug. 18. At Perry Oaks S.F., a maximum of 11 was reached on Aug. 19. A later wave of migrants was recorded from Dartford (c. 25 birds on Sept. 23), and Staines King George VI Res. (18 birds on Oct. 4).

Winter records: Stone Marshes, up to five birds from the beginning of the year until Mar. 31, and single birds from October until the end of the year. (See *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 35). Barn Elms Res., one on Nov. 10. Littleton, Queen Mary Res., two on Dec. 19.

- H Old Parkbury G.P., "an obvious pair, June 30, on some rough land showed every sign of anxiety as if their nest were near by". The pair was still there on July 4 and 14 but despite a thorough search no nest was found (W.D.M., E.H.W.). The conclusion reached by the two observers was that there was a "resident but non-breeding pair". (See *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 35).

423 Wood-Sandpiper

- H Watford S.F., one, July 2 (N.H.P.), and one on Aug. 2 and 5 (B.P.P.).
- M London Airport, one flew over calling on May 13 (H.A.B.). Perry Oaks S.F., single birds on nine dates between Aug. 5 and 29. Two on the farm between Sept. 8 and 16 (many observers).
- S Esher S.F., one on Aug. 12, Sept. 9, and Sept. 16 (D.P.).

424 Green Sandpiper

Spring passage in the London Area was marked by single birds from many widely separated places, Apr. 1 to May 13.

Autumn passage spread over a longer period lasting from July 7 until Oct. 14, although most movement had ceased by the third week in September. Only single birds were seen except at Watford S.F. and Hamper Mill, where a series of interesting observations was made. At these two places birds were again recorded throughout the early months of the year, numbers rising from six to thirteen during the period January to April. August counts revealed a flock of 10 plus, with a maximum of 20 on Aug. 20, and 11 were seen on Sept. 28. There were no October or November records although there was a single bird on Dec. 2 (N.H.P., B.P.P. *et al.*). See *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 35.

Wintering birds were reported from the Thames marshes below Dartford from October until the end of the year. Other single occurrences in winter were recorded from Barn Elms Res., Epsom S.F., Esher S.F., Kempton Park, Roding Valley, Staines Moor and Walthamstow.

431 Spotted Redshank

M Perry Oaks S.F., one from Sept. 9 to 13, and two from Sept. 14 to 16; one was seen and heard flying over on Sept. 19 (N.H.P. *et al.*).

432 Greenshank

E Aveley Marsh, one on June 16 (R.S.). Girling Res., two on Aug. 21; one, Aug. 26, and one on Sept. 2 and 9 (E.R.P., E.S.).

H Hamper Mill and Watford S.F., two from Aug. 2-5, and one on 7th and 8th (H.F.G., B.P.P., N.H.P.).

M Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one flying over on Sept. 18 (M.S.O.). This is the first record for Inner London.

Brent Res., one on Sept. 8, 11, 13 (R.E.J., E.H.W.). Dollis Hill, one heard flying over on Nov. 12 (E.S.). Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Moor and Reservoirs, two on Aug. 6; from Sept. 9 until Oct. 3 single birds and parties up to four were noted in the district by many observers.

S Beddington S.F., one present from Sept. 16 to 20 (B.S.M.). Richmond Park, one heard calling as it flew over at night, Sept. 26 (R.W.HN.).

T Barn Elms Res., one, May 12 (S.K.); single birds were seen on five occasions between Aug. 25 and 30; two on Aug. 31 and Sept. 2 (nine observers).

435 Ringed Plover

E Aveley Marsh, five on Apr. 28 (R.B.W.). Girling Res., six on Aug. 26, eleven on Sept. 9, and five on Sept. 16 (E.R.P.). Lea Valley S.F., one on June 5 (S.K.).

H Old Parkbury, one on Mar. 26 (E.H.W.).

M Brent Res., one on May 4 and Oct. 24 (E.H.W.). Ponders End S.F., three on May 10, one on May 20; one on Sept. 4 and two on Oct. 14 (J.L.F.P.). Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Moor and Reservoirs, present in twos and threes on seven dates between Apr. 22 and May 27, with

a maximum of seven birds on May 19. The autumn movement started during the last week of July with numbers rising to 53 on Aug. 12 and 70 on Aug. 18, gradually falling to *c.* 30 by the end of the month. Parties up to 35 were recorded during September and up to six birds in early October (many observers).

- K Autumn records only. Thames marshes, Dartford-Swanscombe, small parties up to six in number were seen from July 19 until Oct. 20, with a maximum of ten on Aug. 12 (G.B., W.I.B., F.J.H., K.H.P.).
- S Beddington S.F., single birds on the following dates:—May 4, May 26, June 5, and Aug. 13 (B.S.M.). Esher S.F., one on Sept. 16. Walton S.F., one, May 6; seven, May 19 (D.P.).

438 Little Ringed Plover

1951 was the eighth successive year in which Little Ringed Plovers have nested in the London Area. Breeding was proved for twelve pairs out of the 18 pairs which stayed all summer. For comparison, the figures for the seven previous years are 1944, 1 (1); 1945, 2 (2); 1946, 1 (4); 1947, 11 (12-13); 1938, 8 (15-17); 1949, 9 (14); 1950, 6 (12). The increase in 1951 may be more apparent than real; two of the sites, in particular, were better observed than in previous years.

- E It can now be disclosed that the site where Little Ringed Plovers nested in Essex in each year since 1947 was the vast gravelly bed of the new William Girling Reservoir at Chingford. The reservoir was officially opened on September 9, 1951, and was filled shortly after. Earlier in the year, six pairs of Little Ringed Plovers frequented the bed and it is certain that five pairs brought off young, in spite of the constant disturbance caused by the final levelling operations. No Little Ringed Plovers were seen at the Reservoir after the end of July, but birds continued to frequent the adjoining Ponders End Sewage Farm until September 2; a party of 12 was seen there on August 31 (E.R.P., J.P.).
- H Watford S.F., one on July 28 (W.H.D.W.). One at a gravel pit on July 14, 26, 29 and August 8 (W.D.M., E.H.W.).
- M Nine pairs frequented five gravel pits and six of the pairs are known to have nested. In addition, a pair nested on gravelly ground at London Airport but the eggs disappeared. (Many observers). At one of the gravel pits, which had been infrequently watched in the past, D. S. Wilson found two nests on June 24 and on July 12 E.R.P. and D.S.W. saw 12 birds in two parties on a cabbage field adjoining the pit; the eggs in the two nests were still being incubated, so the presence of at least four breeding pairs at this pit seems certain.
- At Perry Oaks S.F., occasional birds were seen in every month between April 1 and September 2 (many observers).
- K Stone Marshes, one on July 17 (K.H.P.).
- S Beddington S.F., one on March 29 (B.S.M.). Three-four birds were seen on May 19 and 27, June 3 and July 1 on semi-flooded, wheat-sown land adjoining a gravel pit; nesting was suspected but not confirmed (D.P.).

440/1 Golden Plover

- E Fairlop and Barkingside, a flock of 230-250 on playing fields and arable land during November and December; Newbury Park, six, Dec. 29 (M.R.C.).
- H Elstree, Radlett and Park Street districts, in flocks from 50 to 120 during January and February. From the end of September numbers rose from 11 to c. 400 on Nov. 3, falling to c. 100 birds by the end of December (A.G., W.D.M., S.K., P.E.L.S., E.H.W.).
- M Hendon, 12 on the aerodrome, Jan. 1 (E.H.W.). Ickenham, one on Jan. 6 (B.P.P.). Staines Moor, c. 40 on Jan. 31 (R.W.HN.); two, Apr. 11 (W.N.M.).
- S Beddington S.F., c. 30 birds from Jan. 1 until Feb. 3. One only from Mar. 2 until Mar. 10; and one on Dec. 15 (B.S.M., A.F.M.).

444 Grey Plover

- H Old Parkbury G.P., one on Dec. 12 (E.H.W.).
- M Staines Moor, one on Apr. 8 (R.W.HN., F.H.J., W.N.M.). Staines, King George VI Res., one, Sept. 22 (E.A.S.).
- K Dartford Marshes, one on Sept. 23 (J.F.B.).

452 Oyster-catcher

- M Staines, King George VI Res., one on July 21 and July 29 (W.N.M., G.L.S., C.A.W.).
- T Barn Elms Res., one, Aug. 10 (L.B.L.).

462 Black Tern

- E Walthamstow Res., one, June 1 (G.R.E.); two, Aug. 28 and two on Sept. 15 (J.B.). King George V Res., two on Sept. 30 (H.W.R.).
- M Brent Res., one on May 8 and May 20 (E.C.O., E.H.W.). Staines Reservoirs, three, May 5; one, May 12 and 30. During autumn passage single birds were seen on five dates between Sept. 9 and Sept. 26 (six observers).
- S Walton G.P., one on May 6 (R.C.Hg.).
- T Barn Elms Res., two on June 9; seven on Aug. 6 (H.B.F., L.B.L., A.G.G.T.).

467 Sandwich Tern

- M Brent Res., one on May 15 (E.H.W.). Staines, King George VI Res., two on Sept. 3 (D.I.M.W.).

469/470 Common/Arctic Tern

No large passage was observed in the Area either in Spring or Autumn.

471 Little Tern

- E Girling Res., two, Sept. 9 (E.R.P.).
- M Littleton, Queen Mary Res., one on Aug. 5 (R.dac.). Perry Oaks S.F., one resting with waders on open mud, Sept. 4 (C.A.W.).

477 Little Gull

M Staines Res., an immature bird stayed from Oct. 3 to 14. Another bird was seen at King George VI Res. on Nov. 9 and 11. At Littleton, Queen Mary Res., a third immature was recorded on Nov. 9 (nine observers).

T Inner London: an immature was seen flying over the Thames near Westminster Bridge, Oct. 19 (R.H.M.R.).

478 Black-headed Gull

Correction. *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 40, for date of ringing of first bird mentioned, read 18.iii.39 instead of 18.iii.49. This bird, ringed as an adult, was therefore at least 13 years old when recovered in March, 1950.

M Numbers nesting at the Perry Oaks S.F. colony showed an increase over the 1950 figure. Some 240 nests were counted in the main gullery on June 3. This figure takes into account the subsidiary colonies which came into being after the main body of birds began nesting and also the usual loss and destruction of nests and eggs. (See *L.B.R.*, 1950, p. 40).

The following recoveries of birds ringed in the London Area were notified during 1951:

<i>Date and place of ringing.</i>	<i>Date and place of recovery.</i>
18.xii.46—Kensington Gardens (B.A.R.)	19.iii.51—Found with broken wing, St. Albans.
29.xii.49—Kensington Gardens (T.L.B.)	29.iii.51—Found dead, Korsor Zealand, Denmark.
1.xii.42—Westminster, County Hall (T.L.B.)	5.xii.50—Caught and released, same place.
5.i.51—St. James's Park (T.L.B.)	1.vii.51—Neustadt, near Lubeck, Belgium.

482 Herring-Gull

Highest numbers reported were at Epsom S.F., c. 400 on Feb. 7 (H.B.).

484/485 Lesser Black-backed Gull

Small numbers were recorded in winter at the main reservoirs, along the Thames, and in Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, and Regent's Park.

486 Great Black-backed Gull

300-400 birds assembled at Walton Res. prior to roosting on Dec. 1, and at Barn Elms Res. there were 59 on Dec. 28 (several observers).

487 Glaucous Gull

T Barn Elms Res., an immature bird, Dec. 15 (H.C.H.).

489 Kittiwake

- E Walthamstow Res., two adults seen and heard on Oct. 28 (H.W.R.).
 M Perry Oaks S.F., one adult, Mar. 26 (P.R.G.). Inner London: St. James's Park, one on Nov. 20 (T.L.B., L.A.W., P.W.).

509 Water-Rail

- H Moor Mill, one on Jan. 13. Again seen and heard calling on July 11 and 29, and Sept. 6 (H.C.H., E.H.W.). Springwell Lake, one or more heard on Apr. 21 (B.P.P., N.H.P.). Stockers Lake, one on Dec. 22 (F.H.J.).
 M Hampstead Heath, one on Nov. 30 (G.T.). Osterley Park, one on Mar. 29 (G.T.P.). Poyle G.P., one, Apr. 9, July 7, and Sept. 5 (A.J.H., D.E.P.). Uxbridge, one on Dec. 15 (R.E.J.). West Hyde, one Jan. 12 (B.P.P.); one on July 8 (R.E.J.).
 K Ruxley G.P., one on Dec. 30 (F.J.H.). Swanscombe Marshes, one, Oct. 4 (W.I.B.).
 S Barn Elms Res., one on Feb. 9 and Feb. 18 (E.M.A., T.S.). Beddington S.F., one on Oct. 10 (A.J.H.). Mitcham Watermeads, one, Dec. 30 (G.B.). Wandsworth Common, one on Jan. 21 and again between Apr. 7 and 19 (F.W.L.).

519 Red-legged Partridge

- E Hainault, three pairs bred. Lambourne End, one pair nested. Within a four mile radius of Lambourne End this species is classed as a widespread and regular breeding species (M.R.C.).
 H Well established in the Barnet by-pass, North Mimms and London Colney districts (S.K.).
 M On the Middx./Herts. border and along the St. Albans road this is a common breeding species (S.K.). Also recorded in the breeding season at Harefield and Ruislip. Nested at London Airport, Osterley Park, Perry Oaks S.F., Poyle G.P., and in the land adjoining the Staines Reservoirs (many observers).
 K Thameside Marshes between Abbey Wood and Swanscombe, well established as a breeding species (G.B., J.F.B., W.I.B.).
 S No breeding records received.

520 Quail

- E Abridge, one heard calling from a field of oats, July 1 (M.R.C.).

Black Redstarts in the London Area, 1951

By N. J. P. WADLEY

INTRODUCTION

FOR two reasons no strict comparison can be made between the results for this year and those for 1949 and 1950. Firstly, song in 1951 was unusually poor, making it difficult to pick up the males early in the season, and thus to locate the females before they began laying. As a similar report was received from France it would seem that this tendency may have been widespread. Nor was it confined to this species, and the exceptionally wet summer was probably responsible. Secondly, the writer was only able to spend about 100 hours in observation compared with 240-250 hours in each of the two previous years.

Even if allowance is made for these factors, it seems that the black redstart suffered a decline in London in 1951. Nine pairs were proved to have bred and they produced fifteen broods with thirty-three young, but two of these broods failed to survive owing to hooliganism and demolition work. First broods fledged between May 31st and June 11th, and second broods between June 27th and July 21st. No third brood was recorded this year.

The notable feature of the season was the preponderance of adult over immature males. Six out of nine breeding males were adults, as were five out of seven males which occupied a territory for any appreciable time, making a total of eleven adults out of sixteen males. In 1948 the great majority of the breeding cocks were in second summer plumage (*vide L.B.R.*, No. 13, p. 33), while in 1949 seven out of thirteen and in 1950 eight out of fifteen were adult. It would seem therefore that any decline in numbers was due to the young birds of 1950, which was a record year, having failed for some reason to return to London to breed.

Birds were reported from two new areas in the City—Finsbury Market and Old Broad Street. Rebuilding operations do not appear to have interfered with breeding except in Walbrook.

Several interesting records from past years came to light in 1951. Breeding is now stated to have taken place at Beddington Cement Works in 1948 and 1949. A pair which nested in the Croydon New Power Station, some 500 yards away, was interfered with by a second cock (*vide L.B.R.*, No. 14, p. 40). At Fulham, males were reported singing for extended periods of the summer in 1949 and 1950, and at Hounslow two birds were seen in April and May. Taken together these reports suggest that the black redstart may well be breeding over a wider area of London than existing records prove.

SUMMARY OF BREEDING RECORDS:

I. *Cripplegate Area*: (a) Bridgewater Square: this pair was again molested by small boys who took two eggs from the first clutch of four and subsequently broke down the nest. Two juveniles of the second brood were seen with the parents in September (s.d.h.).

(b) Jewin Crescent: three eggs laid in the first nest were deserted when workmen removed large blocks of masonry from the wall in which this pair nested. The hen laid a single egg in a new nest, but only after an interval of five days did she lay two more eggs and brood them. Two young were raised (S.D.H., I.C.T.N., E.H.W.).

(c) London Wall, Wood Street: the adult cock in this territory was paired on April 16th but no record of breeding was obtained until two juveniles were seen with the parents in August (R.E.J.).

(d) London Wall, Coleman Street: an immature and unusually silent cock took over this area on March 22nd and raised broods of two and four, which fledged on June 11th and July 21st (R.E.J.).

II. *Ropemaker Street*: reports of this area were scanty and insufficient to provide a true picture. An immature cock and his mate occupied the southern part after an adult cock had disputed possession. The pair were seen with one juvenile late in the season. But an earlier brood of three/four was reported from near by and might have been brought off by this pair or a pair in Chisholm Street, where the adult took up territory but no hen was seen (S.D.H., R.E.J.).

III. *Cannon Street, Watling Street*: an adult cock paired late—c. May 20th—and two young were fledged on June 27-28th. This family had the honour of being photographed by Eric Hosking (F.J.H., E.H.W., W.G.T.).

IV. *Paternoster Row*: this pair, of which the cock was a fine adult, raised two broods each of three from the same nest after the hen had built a second nest some 80 yards away and left it (F.J.H., E.H.W., W.G.T.).

V. *Gresham Street*: a female or immature male was frequently seen here during the winter months (see below). This or another immature was singing on April 25th and was constantly in evidence in May, though no female was recorded. Early in September, however, four juveniles were seen with their parents.

VI. *Fetter Lane*: The most successful pair recorded for the season occupied the northern part of this territory and raised two broods of four each. These families fledged on June 1st and July 8th. There is some doubt whether a second pair reported on June 12th in the southern part of the area was, in fact, separate. *vide* Farringdon Avenue record (F.J.H., V.W.).

BREEDING PROBABLE:

VII. *Earl's Court, Brompton Cemetery*: an adult male was seen and heard in full song on April 15th and a second, distinguishable adult cock arrived two days later. No hen was recorded until July 17th, though it is possible that it was missed earlier (M.C.).

VIII. *Beddington Cement Works*: this disused works is near Croydon New Power Station, where pairs were observed in the breeding seasons of 1949 and 1950. An adult was seen this year carrying food to a damaged part of the quarry buildings (B.S.M.).

NON-BREEDING RECORDS :

Inner London: *Old Broad Street*: an immature male was often seen and heard singing throughout May from buildings round a small blitzed site on this busy thoroughfare. A second bird was thought to have been noticed on one occasion (R.S.A., R.B.W.).

Finsbury Market: an adult male held a territory in this new area from April 29th to June 10th. Owing to the difficulties of watching this built-up vicinity it is possible that a pair escaped detection (M.R.C.).

Farringdon Avenue: an observer saw a pair with an adult cock entering the top windows of a bombed building on July 17th as though going to a nest, but further watching suggested that these birds may have been the Fetter Lane pair (I.L.M.).

Outer London: no summer records were received this year.

WINTER RECORDS IN THE BREEDING AREA, 1950-51 :

There were many reports of the adult male and the female or immature male which stayed the winter in the Cripplegate area. Both birds were seen on various dates from November to January, but only the brown bird in February. The adult, as last year, favoured the Jewin Crescent territory, while the other spent the end of 1950 in Silver Street, moving to the Coachman's Cottage and Fore Street early in January and returning to Silver Street in March. The adult was last seen on January 23rd, but there was an adult in command of Jewin Crescent again on March 1st. Song was heard from Addle Street on February 15th, and though this bird was not seen it suggests that the brown bird was an immature male (E.H.W., P.B., H.M., R.B.W., D.V.F.).

OTHER WINTER RECORDS :

Surrey: *Beddington Sewage Farm*: one, Jan. 1st-13th; one, Oct. 27th; one, Dec. 1st-28th; two, Dec. 29th (B.S.M., A.J.H.).

RECORDS FROM PAST YEARS :

Fulham, 1948 and 1949. An adult male is now reported to have "spent the summer" midway between Fulham and Lots Road Power Stations. It sang persistently from the lightning conductor of a tall building. This is the first record from this area (F.W.L.).

Beddington Cement Works, 1949 and 1950. Reports were received of pairs having bred in these disused buildings in both years (B.S.M.).

Hounslow, 1950. Two black redstarts were reported from a garden in April and May (D.J.).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS :

Observers have once again provided excellent information of the black redstart in the London area. I would like to thank particularly S. D. Herington, F. J. Holroyde, R. E. Jones, P. Barraud, Miss M. Curtis, B. S. Milne and Professor E. H. Warmington for detailed accounts of their work. The many other valuable reports are gratefully acknowledged and have been entered on the permanent files.

The Colour-Varieties of Feral Pigeons

By DEREK GOODWIN

THE different colour-varieties of the feral pigeons of London are of interest for two reasons. Firstly, as showing to what extent the different colours that have been produced in domestication tend to persist or die out when man is no longer deliberately acting as a selective agent. Secondly, because it is often incorrectly stated that they have reverted or are reverting to the original wild colour. It should be remembered that the London birds are descended in the main from the old-fashioned semi-wild "dovecote pigeon", which was usually blue-chequered or blue.

In the following brief description of the colour-varieties occurring in London, the percentages given are estimates for the London population as a whole and may be, and in some cases most certainly are, quite untrue for the populations in any one district.

(1) Blue: the original wild colour; general colour bluish-grey, wings crossed by two broad black bars formed by black marks on the secondaries and greater coverts; upper part of rump usually white or pale grey, but often medium or darkish grey. Common, probably about 10-12 per cent. of the population are so-coloured.

(2) Blue-chequer: as in blue, but the black markings extend to most or all of the wing coverts so that the closed wing appears spotted with black. In dark blue-chequers the wing coverts are predominately black, only small grey markings showing at the tip of each feather. This is the commonest colour, about 50 per cent of London's pigeons being blue-chequers of some sort.

(3) Velvet (often wrongly termed "dark chequer" or "black"): as in dark blue-chequers but the wing coverts are entirely black. Common, perhaps about 5 to 8 per cent. of the population.

(4) Black: pure black pigeons are rare in feral populations, but birds of a dull slatey black are not uncommon, about 5 per cent.

(5) Mealy, red-chequer and red are similar to blue, blue-chequer and velvet respectively, but with reddish-brown instead of black markings, on a brownish-white ground. They have no bar on the tail, however, and their breasts and underparts are usually brownish. They are to be seen in most London flocks but do not in all amount to more than 5 per cent.

(6) Grizzle: this term denotes a pattern in which the colour on each feather is more or less mixed and streaked with white. Every intergradation exists between the "white grizzle," which is mainly a grizzled greyish-white with dark wing bars, and the "iron grizzle" which is predominantly blackish-grey, and similarly with the "red" colours. About as numerous as red, mealy, etc., but more easily overlooked. In juvenile plumage grizzles, often almost entirely white, are always paler than they will become later.

(7) Pied and white: any of the above colours may show partial albinism, the primaries, head, neck, rump and belly being the areas most often affected. Such specimens are common, probably 10 per cent. "Gay piers," showing more white than coloured plumage, are comparatively rare, and pure white birds still more so, although their conspicuousness, when newly moulted and clean, makes them appear more numerous than they are.

Most of the colours described can be further subdivided. For example, blues and blue-chequers may be "plummy", that is with pinkish-tinged cere and eye-rims, a peculiar dulling of the blue-grey ground colour, and a strong, non-iridescent, wine-red suffusion on the neck and upper breast. They may be "smoky", a dark dingy-grey ground colour, or "silver-blue", a pale bright blue-grey ground, with a silvery frosted appearance of the neck feathers: or they may be "kite-barred", with the wing bars chestnut, or suffused with chestnut, instead of pure black. It has, however, been thought advisable to describe only the typical and most numerous phase of each colour-variety.

There are other colour-varieties, such as silvers, which are a peculiar pale creamy ground-colour, with markings of greyish-brown, but otherwise as in the "blue" colours; barless mealies, whose name is sufficient description, and mosaics, in which all the colours and markings are curiously blurred and indistinct, but they are mostly very rare in feral populations. All adult coloured pigeons show the beautiful green, pink and purple iridescence on the neck feathers, which differs in tone and intensity according to the general colour pattern and which makes them among the loveliest of our common birds.

The feral pigeon of London normally has an iris of bright orange, or orange-red, characteristic of the wild rock pigeon. "Pearl" eyes, in which the iris is pinkish-red and white, are however quite common, as are eyes of dark brownish-red or pale orange-yellow. White (albino) pigeons have dark eyes by which, however dirty, they can at once be distinguished from "grizzles" with their coloured eyes. In pied pigeons the eyes may be dark or normal, or parti-coloured, like the birds themselves.

All young pigeons have at first dull greyish eyes which gradually acquire their full brilliance. Their juvenile plumage is also duller with only slight iridescence on the neck. The eyes of adult pigeons fade in colour when they are sick, regaining their original brilliance when the bird recovers.

The Census of Great Crested Grebes, 1951

By W. D. MELLUISH

EARLY in June 1951 members of the Ornithological Section made a count of adult Great Crested Grebes (*Podiceps cristatus*) in the London Area. This formed a part of the ten year sample census organised by the British Trust for Ornithology and was the sixth in the series begun in 1946.

The main object of the census was to determine as accurately as possible the total number of adult birds in the breeding season. About 170 waters, including flooded gravel pits, reservoirs and lakes were visited in fine and warm weather.

One of the Middlesex gravel pits was found to have been filled in since the previous summer and a newly enlarged pit at West Hyde in Hertfordshire was occupied for the first time.

A total of 532 adult grebes was counted, showing a decline of 22 from last year's figure. If adjustments are made to allow for the few waters not visited, the comparative totals for 1950 and 1951 are 544 and 507 respectively, with a fall of 6.8% in the current season. This was mainly due to the absence of the large flocks of non-breeding birds that had been a feature of the concrete-banked reservoirs of Surrey in 1950, the more extensive Essex waters also being similarly less frequented. Surrey counts were lower by 27.5% and those for Essex by 25.7%. On the other hand the Hertfordshire and Middlesex figures were the highest yet recorded in the series for these two counties.

The actual numbers of adult grebes observed were:—

	<i>Total Adults</i>			
Bucks	53
Essex	75
Herts	96
Kent	6
Middlesex	195
Surrey	107
				<hr/>
<i>Total</i>	532

In all some 102 gravel pits were visited and just over half of them were occupied by grebes. The pits were more populated than reservoirs or lakes, 282 birds, or 53% of the aggregate, showing preference for this type of habitat. This result reverses the trend noted in the two previous summers when "other waters" were in greater favour (*cf. L.B.R.*, No. 14, p. 38, and No. 15, p. 47) and reinstates the 1946 to 1948 position.

Reports of 121 nesting pairs were received from observers, compared with 149 in 1950. Whilst this may be accepted as indicating a falling trend, in line with the decline in total numbers, no claim can be made that the figure represents an accurate breeding count, owing to the difficulties mentioned in earlier reports of restricted access to nesting sites and of limited observation in some cases (*vide L.B.R.*, No. 12, p. 36 and No. 13, p. 35).

Thanks for their helpful co-operation are due to the following who carried out the census work in the field:—Miss C. M. Acland, H. E. Andrews, R. S. Ashley, S. Austin, L. Baker, T. L. Bartlett, C. H. Bentham. Miss M. Bennett, Borough Road College (per P. A. Warner), Miss E. M. Goom, Miss G. A. Hains, L. F. Harris, Dr. J. M. Harrison. J. N. Hobbs, R. C. Hodgson, P. A. D. Hollom, F. J. Holroyde, A. E. Jolley, K. P. Keywood, F. R. Mann, A. Manning, W. N. Mitchell, Miss E. M. A. Norris, B. A. Richards, M. G. Ridpath, H. W. Rudd. B. L. Sage, Mrs. E. Souter, W. G. Vincent, C. Walters, Prof. E. H. Warmington, C. A. White.

Recording

DURING the past few years our membership has increased so much that observers are often personally unknown to Recorders and other members of the Records Committee. While every effort is made to meet contributors, and explanations of the recording system are given in circulars from time to time, it is felt that a short summary may be helpful here.

Notes sent in are recorded on cards, after any necessary verification, to form a permanent record of species in the London Area (which is bounded by a circle of 20 miles radius centred on St. Paul's). These cards are a fund of knowledge from which selected items are published annually in the *London Bird Report*. They also serve a long-term purpose as the Society's book 'The Birds of the London Area, 1900-1950' will show.

The Area is divided among the Recorders as follows:—

- 'Inner London'—a rectangle 8 miles from E. to W. and 5 miles from N. to S. centred on Charing Cross. It includes the City and all the central parks, and reaches almost to Hammersmith.
- 'North of the Thames'—those parts of Middlesex (excluding 'Inner London'), Essex, Herts. and Bucks., which fall within the twenty-mile radius.
- 'South of the Thames'—the Thames and all parts of Kent and Surrey (excluding 'Inner London') that fall within the twenty-mile radius.

Even so, the work of each Recorder is heavy and it would greatly help if all observers would co-operate in the following ways:—

1. Please put your notes on the Society's recording sheets. The Recorders will send them on request.
2. Please send your notes to the Recorder responsible for the district in which you made your observation. This means using separate sheets for 'Inner London,' for North and for South. The Recorders' names and addresses are in the Society's current Programme.

3. Species should be entered on these sheets in the order used in the Society's field record cards, not in date order. An announcement will be made as soon as the Wetmore classification is adopted by the Society.
4. Please send in your records promptly at the end of June and by January 10th of the following year.

It is the task of the Recorders and Committee to judge the reliability of reports of species difficult to distinguish in the field (e.g. Arctic tern), or of birds which are either rare in Britain, or rare in the London Area though common in other parts. Observers are therefore asked to submit a copy of their field notes when they record any such bird. The importance of additional information apart from plumage, such as comparative size, stance or attitude, habits and calls cannot be over-emphasised. These points, with such information as distance from the bird, type of binoculars or telescope used, light and position of sun and the observer's previous experience of the species, will do much to increase the value of a record.

In the case of a very unusual species the observer should try to get confirmation or help from another observer. The Recorders are glad to be notified immediately on such occasions in order to assist if possible. Members need not refrain from this on 'security' grounds; if they wish news of the bird not to be passed on or the record not to appear in the *London Bird Report*, their wishes are respected.

North Kent Marshes

FOR many years members of the London Natural History Society have been in the habit of visiting the North Kent marshes east of Gravesend and, generally speaking, the owners of the land, their shepherds and the lessees of the shooting rights have been very tolerant. So many visitors, however, who are often members of this Society, are now trespassing that the owners are insistent that their permission is obtained before crossing the fresh marshes.

It must be emphasised that the land inside the sea-walls is private property and that crossing it without permission (except by the few tracks over which there is a public right of way) is, quite simply, trespass. The picking of mushrooms is an additional source of irritation to the landowners and their shepherds, while the tenants of the shooting rights not unnaturally resent disturbance along the fleets in the main shooting season.

In the interests of all concerned, members are asked to remember:—

- (1) That they must not cross the fresh marshes without first obtaining permission;
- (2) that they must avoid disturbance of the fleets in the shooting season;
- (3) that they must not pick mushrooms without obtaining permission;
- (4) that gates must be shut and help given to sheep found on their backs.

Bird Ringing Report, 1950-51

THE number of birds ringed by the Society during the year to September 30th, 1951, was a record. The total of 4,112 exceeded those of the ringing stations at, for example, Skokholm, Spurn and Fair Isle in the same period. The Starling Enquiry ringed 1,586 out of a total of 2,780 Starlings, and the next most numerous species to be recorded were Blackbirds, 238; Robins, 118; Blue Tits, 106, and Greenfinches, 98. Altogether 68 species were ringed by the 37 members taking part. Unusual birds to be marked were Little Ringed Plover, Montagu's Harrier and Cirl Bunting.

Recoveries of more than 170 birds ringed by members were notified in the year and the more interesting records are given under the individual species in the systematic list.

<i>Ringer</i>	<i>Nestlings</i>	<i>Trapped</i>	<i>Total</i>
M. J. Ardley	6	2	8
L. Baker	5	137	142
T. L. Bartlett	38	55	93
S. Boardman	4	96	100
J. F. Burton	15	67	82
P. G. Clinkskel	3	5	8
C. L. Collenette	—	174	174
S. Cramp	—	25	25
W. H. Dady	2	65	67
E. H. Down	11	5	16
J. Farrand	9	72	81
R. S. R. Fitter	108	9	117
A. Gibbs	26	198	224
D. Goodwin	30	93	123
Miss N. Goom	—	1	1
H. F. Greenfield	—	7	7
G. F. Hawkins	1	5	6
P. J. Hayman	27	3	30
A. J. Henty	15	3	18
R. C. Homes	27	20	47
A. E. Jolley	—	20	20
Miss G. McLeish	13	10	23
G. E. Manser	71	199	270
B. S. Milne	41	143	184
H. Murray	5	65	70
A. F. Myers	85	54	139
K. H. Palmer	7	70	77
W. D. Park	8	2	10
E. R. Parrinder	10	47	57
B. A. Richards	—	2	2
Miss D. A. Rook	—	22	22
P. E. L. Simmonds	—	66	66
D. F. Street	—	66	66
W. G. Teagle	2	—	2
A. G. G. Thompson	10	—	10
C. A. White	—	21	21
J. A. Wigzell	4	114	118
Starling Enquiry	—	1586	1586
Total, 1950-51	583	3529	4112
Total, 1949-50	603	2482	3085

Members are reminded that the new Ringing Secretary, W. D. Park, 8 Worcester Park Road, Worcester Park, Surrey, is anxious to receive information on all aspects of ringing for eventual dissemination. Details of traps with a photograph of sketch plan if possible, improved methods of construction, baits, sites, methods of catching birds by nets or any other means will be most welcome.

Reviews

FITTER, R. S. R., and RICHARDSON, R. A., 1952. *The Pocket Guide to British Birds*. Pp. xiv + 240, 64 coloured, 48 black-and-white plates, and line figures. London: Collins. 21s.

HOLLOM, P. A. D., edited by, 1952. *The Popular Handbook of British Birds*. Pp. xxiii + 424, 132 coloured and 20 black-and-white plates. London: H. F. & G. Witherby. 45s.

It is not often that two bird books by members of this Society can be welcomed at once. *The Handbook of British Birds* in five volumes (1938-41) has been generally recognised as pre-eminent among British bird books, but its size has certain disadvantages which *The Popular Handbook of British Birds* now overcomes. In one volume Philip Hollom has brought together all the information essential to a field observer, and has revised the sections on field characters and distribution. This concentration has been achieved by ignoring all species that have occurred in the British Isles less than ten or a dozen times, by omitting the detailed plumage descriptions, compressing notes on foreign distribution and treating races of a species under one heading.

A welcome change is the re-arrangement of the plates which now appear less cramped, while grouping of the pages with illustrations assists comparison of related species. An additional feature is the adoption of the Wetmore classification. Although the work is not intended for bird watchers in their very early stages, it is one to which they should unquestionably turn as soon as they have a good general idea of birds and their relationships. For the more advanced reader it has the great advantage of making portable the most useful sections in the field of the fuller work.

Collins' Pocket Guide to British Birds is aimed primarily at the beginner and ignores classification, arranging birds according to land, waterside or water habitat, with eight further divisions according to their length. Notes on plumage, structure, carriage and type of flight, voice, field marks, distribution and habitat are given for each species, including many "escapes" which may commonly be seen in the wilds. Over 1000 illustrations, of which some 600 are in colour, include both sexes and first-winter birds where the plumages are markedly different, and are arranged so that similar plumages appear together even if this means that males and females are shown on separate pages. Generally speaking, the colour reproduction is very good, but on a few pages it

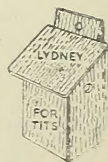
has a washed-out appearance which is no reflection on the artist, whose work is much to be commended. Size of the birds is shown by printing a silhouette of a sparrow on each page on the same scale as the illustrations. The elaborate key to assist identification may seem too involved to some people, but many of the ideas in this book are both original and successful, and it can safely be recommended to beginners as the best of its kind yet produced. Many more advanced workers will find it equally useful, especially the flight illustrations.

R. C. H.

FOR BIRD LOVERS

"NATURE GIFTS" (3d) illustrates innumerable useful novelties, including best Toilet SOAP with pictures (by Roland Green, F.Z.S.) which do NOT wash off: box of Three Tablets 4/2.

"BIRD SANCTUARY" Catalogue (3d) includes all types of NESTBOXES and Feeding Devices. New B.T.O. type large nestbox: tit or robin, 12 9.



"RINGING EQUIPMENT" Catalogue (3d). Duplex Trap 39/6. Greenrigg 92/6 Ringing Register 15/6 Coloured Rings, etc.

Dept. 10, GREENRIGG WORKS

WOODFORD GREEN - ESSEX

The British Trust for Ornithology

2 KING EDWARD STREET, OXFORD

The aim of the British Trust for Ornithology is the encouragement of individual field research and of co-operative investigations where these are suitable for any particular problem. *Individual research* is encouraged in three ways—by giving members publicity in the Trust's bulletins for approved requests for information on their own line of research, by holding courses in bird biology at certain Field Centres, and by giving small grants towards the cost of special activities on applications approved by the Scientific Advisory Committee. Members of the Trust can also take part in the Nest Records Scheme and population studies, such as the census of heronries and of great crested grebes.

A programme designed to forward the study of field ornithology needs organisation and money. The Trust would welcome, therefore, the support of members of local natural history societies, and can offer, in addition to participation in the schemes outlined above, a good library service, regular bulletins on current activities, meetings in many centres, and the help of Regional Representatives throughout the British Isles. An advisory service by which the Secretary can put members in touch with others interested in the same problem has already proved its value.

Ordinary membership, open to anyone over the age of sixteen, costs One Pound annually, but members under twenty-one may pay Ten Shillings. Further information may be obtained from the Secretary at the above address or from Mr. R. C. Homes, the Regional Representative for the London Area.

BIRD FILMS

Members of the L.N.H.S. will have seen the colour films produced by the Society, featuring the birds of two of its Suffolk reserves, Havergate Island and Minsmere Level, and the birds of the Orkney and Shetland Islands. All of us who are interested in birds wish to see more bird reserves, where essential habitats are preserved and where birds can be watched or studied scientifically under ideal conditions.

Few bird watchers are unfamiliar with the pitiful sight of dying sea-birds polluted by foul oil, or with the destructive activities of some children in the breeding season when nests are pulled out of hedgerows. These are some of the problems which the R.S.P.B. is tackling through the buying and maintenance of reserves and employment of wardens, through publicity and through education. Its achievements rest on the solid foundation-stone of its steadily growing membership, but much greater support is urgently needed to extend and develop its activities.

If you are not already a member, now is your opportunity to play your part in this constructive work. Please write to P. E. BROWN, Secretary, R.S.P.B., 82, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1, for a free illustrated prospectus.

NATURAL HISTORY BOOKS

WHELDON & WESLEY LTD.

83-84 BERWICK STREET, LONDON, W.1

PHONE . . . GERRARD 6459

A selection of bird books

Collins Pocket Guide to British Birds

by R. S. R. FITTER, Illustrated by R. A. RICHARDSON

"A great advance on anything published previously at anything like the price. Excellent descriptions ; good notes of field characters ; 600 pictures in colour; 400 in black and white. Of value to anyone, whether experienced observer or beginner."

—A. W. BOYD, Manchester Guardian

Foreword by Peter Scott. Coat pocket size. Complete. 21s.

The Fulmar

JAMES FISHER

New Naturalist
Special Volume

"The most complete work of its kind written on any one species, and a really important contribution to ornithological literature."

—A. W. BOYD, Manchester Guardian

"Geographically and biographically exhaustive, yet written admirably, with avoidance of unnecessary technicalities. A book that every ornithologist will desire for his shelves."—NATURALIST

137 illustrations (4 in colour). 35s.

Shorelands Summer Diary

CHARLES
TUNNICLIFFE

With pen and brush the author describes the bird and country activities round his beautiful Anglesey home. "He is not only an outstanding artist but an accomplished writer."—TIME AND TIDE

16 full pages of colour plates. 180 drawings. 2 gns.

Birds as Individuals

LEN HOWARD

The bird book that turned best-seller—now in its 5th edition. "She is able to watch birds more scientifically because she loves them and they do not fear her. No scientist can fail to be won over by her masterly analysis of bird song technique."—LISTENER

Photographs specially taken by Eric Hosking. 12s. 6d.

COLLINS

PUBLISHERS OF THE NEW NATURALIST LIBRARY